

# Numismatic Rogues Gallery

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A Work-in-Progress April 30, 2024

## Introduction

This is a catalogue of people in the numismatic hobby who are perpetrators or victims of crimes resulting in convictions. It also mentions some victims in cases that have not been solved. In a few cases, suspects have died before they could be prosecuted.

## Previous Publications

Many of the people included in this publication have been included in prior publications by the author. *American Numismatic Biographies* (ANB) was published on paper in 1992. It is regularly revised and posted on the Newman Numismatic Portal. Most numismatic killers and victims are included in ANB.

*A History of Coin Dealers in the Twin Cities Area* was written for the Northwest Coin Club and published on the club website in 2016. It covers the same topic as the chapter on "The Minnesota Problem."

The author contributes regular articles for publication in *The E-Sylum*. Some of those articles are republished here. Other articles cover individuals mentioned here.

A book by Moira Greyland. *The Last Closet* (2018), covers the life of her father, Walter Breen. That was used as a source. However, this author contributed scanned copies of articles to that author. Thus, he was a source for the source.

## Other Sources

Contemporary newspaper articles are available by subscription on newspapers.com. Citations are not included because the same material is frequently covered in multiple articles. Where quotes are used, the citation appears with the text.

Court transcripts are not generally available on the web. Transcripts of legal appeals are frequently available and may include a summary of the case.

Each state has a website that may be used to locate convicts. This is used to find current convicts. In a few cases they give release dates for former convicts.

## Habitual Criminals

It will be seen that numismatic crimes are often not isolated events. Crimes are perpetrated by habitual criminals, organized gangs, and the organized crime community.

## Unsolved Crimes

In general, only crimes that result in convictions are described here. There are many similar crimes that are not reported, not prosecuted or not resulting in convictions,

## A Work-in-Progress

This is presented as a work-in-progress to judge the level of interest in the topic. Readers are encouraged to suggest other stories to be included and other sources that may provide additional information.

## Numbers

The index at the end of the document includes 429 names as of 4/30/2014. These represent:

324 Perpetrators  
200 Incidents  
94 Victims  
7 Aliases  
5 Others (witnesses)

People who are mentioned in the stories but are not perpetrators or victims are not included in the index.

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## Authors

The story of **Dale Estin Birdsell** should begin with his father Raymond Earle Birdsell. Raymond was born in Frankfort, Kansas, on August 7, 1893. In 1913 he was charged with forgery for passing bad checks in Oakland, California. He was sentenced to a year in Folsom Prison.

He next received a six-year sentence for forgery in 1915 and was sent to San Quentin Prison. He was released in 1919.

Raymond married Ona Robinson on December 20, 1920. Their son Dale was born on November 7, 1921.

Raymond was described by authorities as “one of California’s most prolific passers of fictitious checks.” He was caught again in 1932 and sentenced to life in prison as a habitual criminal. He died in Folsom Prison August 1, 1938.



Dale was only ten-years-old when his father went to prison for life. Perhaps in that limited time, the father had an influence on his son.

Dale Birdsell was discharged from the Army in 1941 for swindling. He enlisted in the Army again on July 24, 1943, and served overseas during World War II. His registration papers indicate he had two years of college and was employed as an office clerk. He was listed as single with dependents. He was examined by an Army psychiatrist in 1944 who found him to be psychopathic and

he was discharged.

In August of 1956 he was selected as a judge to pick the winner for the Miss Mississippi contest. He was described as director of the American Models Association in New Orleans.

A month later he was charged with extortion. Birdsell, working with the College Queen contest took nude pictures and threatened to expose and disgrace one of the women. At the time he was editor and publisher of *Southern Digest*, a pro-segregation paper in Baton Rouge. A search of his house turned up a hypodermic needle and syringe. Possession resulted in a seven year prison sentence at Angola State Penitentiary. In June of 1957 he was granted a new trial because of faults with the first trial. The Mississippi Supreme Court declared the conviction unconstitutional and he was released.

Just a few months later in 1958, Birdsell, 37, met a 16-year-old girl in the Ritz Hotel lobby in Washington. She had run away from home in Maryland. He said she could be a model and offered to manage her career. They got on a bus intending to go to New Orleans. They got as far as Memphis where the girl became disillusioned with Birdsell. She left him and notified police. He and the girl were registered at the King Cotton hotel as husband and wife. Birdsell was tried and convicted of contributing to the delinquency of a minor, fined \$1000 and sentenced to 11 months and 29 days in the Selby County (Tennessee) workhouse.

In 1960, he was described as an Arkansas Ku Klux Klan organizer. On trial again, he could not afford an attorney and represented himself. He gave a long speech in his defense saying that he had an irresistible impulse due to a mental and emotional breakdown. He said that he had two unsuccessful marriages, a psychiatric discharge from the army and suffered a skull fracture in an automobile accident. He was convicted of five counts of passing bad checks and again received a two-year prison sentence. He was released on probation in May of 1962.

In 1964, Birdsell was convicted on charges related to transporting three Thunderbirds for sale in Mexico. An attempt was made to determine his sanity. He testified to doctors that he was acting under orders from his commanding general, Nathan Bedford Forrest, provisional Army Confederate States of America and Imperial Wizard of

the Ku Klux Klan. He said that stealing cars was not illegal as he was foraging to support the cause. The doctor concluded that Birdsell could no longer tell right from wrong and should be committed to a federal mental institution. He was admitted to Springfield, Missouri Medical Center for Federal Prisoners. The conviction was sustained.

In 1969 he was charged with forgery, declared incompetent to stand trial and was sent to Austin State Hospital where he escaped.

In Houston in 1970, he admitted that he cashed 200 bad checks worth \$10,000. He claimed that he was raising money to finance a rightwing revolution. He intended to pay everyone back after the revolution.

The numismatic community is fortunate that Birdsell was out of prison long enough to make his contribution to numismatic literature. Birdsell compiled *Ku Klux Klan Tokens* that was published in 1977. It was twenty pages with illustrations describing eighty pieces. A second edition published in 1981 was expanded to forty pages.

In 1984 he was again arrested in Victoria, Texas, and accused of passing bad cashier's checks worth \$17,367.91. He was implicated in a larger nation-wide check forging scheme.

Dale died in Fort Worth, Texas, on October 15, 1993.

Previous biographies have unfortunately confused Dale Birdsell from Texas with Dale Birdsell from Oregon (1920-1998). A story in the May 14, 2023, issue of *The E-Sylum* was the result of that confusion.

**Walter Breen** is discussed at length in the Pedophiles chapter.

**Robert Harry Burnie** (b. 5/20/1916 d. 8/14/1989) was the author of *Small California and Territorial Gold Coins: Quarter Dollars, Half Dollars, Dollars* (1955). He married Ruth Curry on July 2, 1939, and they had a son and daughter.

He was apparently well respected in Pascagoula, Mississippi, as a scout leader

and fund raiser. He was the Jackson County, Mississippi, chairman for the March of Dimes and fund raiser for the Jackson County Kiwanis Club.

Burnie conducted a mail bid sale of gold coins dated May 31, 1956. The terms of sale required a 50% deposit with bids. The sale was never held and Burnie took off with the deposits of about \$35,000.

Burnie took the money to buy a new Oldsmobile for his wife and a Cadillac El Dorado for himself. To avoid loneliness on his trip, he picked up a dancing school instructor and headed for Mexico City.

He was later arrested at the Texas/Mexico border, brought to Tyler, Texas, and charged with fraud. He pleaded guilty to five counts of mail fraud on February 26, 1957. On March 15, 1957, he was sentenced to three years in prison.

After his release from prison, Burnie moved to Las Vegas and died there in 1989.

His story was told in "Burned by Burnie" by George F. Kobe in the March 2020 issue of *The Numismatist*.

**Charles Lynn Glaser** (b. 6/25/1943 d. 4/28/2011)

Born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. Married Nosta Boll October 1, 1966. They had a son. Received B.F.A. from Philadelphia College of Art in 1966.

He began collecting at age 14. In 1961 he and Paul Weinstein began a dealership in Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania, DBA Metropolitan Coin Company. Later that year the partnership dissolved. Weinstein retained the dealership. Glaser remained publisher of the *Metropolitan Numismatic Journal* under the new name *Numismatic Journal*. Walter Breen was the editor.

He contributed the "Numismatically Speaking" column to *Numismatic News*. Author of *Counterfeiting in America* in 1968.

In 1974 he was charged with stealing maps at Dartmouth and served seven months in prison. In 1982 he was convicted of stealing maps from the University of Minnesota and sentenced to six months in prison. In 1985 he was convicted of stealing rare maps from libraries. There were other incidents.

**Frank Albert Lapa** (b. 10/24/1931 d. 8/28/1995)

Born in Chicago. Proprietor of Coins of the World in Chicago. Coin dealer in Beverly Hills, California, author of:

*Russian Wire Money*, 16 pages (1967)

*Check List of Siege and Necessity Money* (1968)

*Kandy Kings of Ceylon 1055-1295 A.D.* (1968)

*Vatican City 1929* (1969)

Convicted in 1977 for the 1975 murder of Raymond Yablun. He was released on parole after serving less than fifteen years for the murder.

He was also an accomplished painter or copyist of paintings.

He died in Santa Clara, California.

**Richard W. Suter** was the author of *How Not to Get Ripped off in the Coin Business*. He was a member of the Numismatic Literary Guild.

He was charged with swindling customers out of more than \$67,000. He was convicted in 1984, sentenced to a year in prison ordered to pay restitution and to stay out of the coin business.

## Burglary

The Omaha public library was the repository for the Byron Reed coin collection. Security was a problem and there were several attempts to rob the collection.

On August 31, 1900, a silent alarm was sent from the library to the police station. The police called the library and the janitor was sent to investigate. He reported suspicious activity and the police responded.

**Frank Howe** was arrested in the coin room and was accused of trying to break a lock with a metal tool. In November he was convicted of having burglar tools in his possession for the purpose of committing burglary.

On June 8, 1909, the janitor responded to a burglar alarm. **Norman Bateman** was found leaning on one of the cases and arrested. In his possession was a wood rasp which he explained he used to comb his hair. The judge was not impressed and Bateman was sentenced to twenty days in jail.

Upon his release, he attempted to pass bad checks in town. He was returned to jail for an extension of his time.

**Ed Cromley** was also taken into custody and suspected of being a lookout for Bateman. The judge politely suggested he leave town.

As the Omaha World-Herald reported, "Upon his promise to create big clouds of dust and smoke in making his exit from the metropolis, Crumley was permitted to ooze."

**Frank Collins** was the name given by an attempted burglar apprehended in the Omaha library on January 2, 1930.

He had broken a basement window to get into the building, pried open an iron screen, broke through a heavy iron grating and drilled a series of holes through door. When he reached through to turn the doorknob, he set off an alarm. He admitted that he had hidden tools in books on the shelves.

He told police he was out of work. "I think I could have lived the rest of my life on the proceeds from the sale of that collection," he said. He eventually told police his real name was S. H. Fisher. from Austin, Texas.

On January 7, 1930, he was sentenced to two years in the state penitentiary. Admitting to a long criminal history, he said, "I'll bet you I die in the penitentiary this trip."

**Frederick Holtz** was convicted of a burglary at the Baltimore home of Waldo Newcomer. Value of the loss was estimated at \$30,000.

Newcomer had a burglar alarm installed in 1913. One of the electricians rented a safety deposit box and paid with a \$50 California Territorial gold coin. Stanley Walker was manager of the safe deposit boxes. He showed the gold coin to S. H. Chapman who identified it as a coin sold to Newcomer. Holtz was arrested and charged with the burglary.

Out of 1250 stolen pieces, only 151 were recovered from the safe deposit box. When Holz had difficulty disposing of the silver coins, he dumped them into the Hudson River near Weehawken. Those coins had a face value of \$2,442.

**\*Gary Don Miller** was charged with Burglary, theft and criminal damage after driving a pickup truck through the front of the Catalina Coin Shop in Tucson, Arizona. The 1993 theft included \$20,000 worth of coins, gold and silver, guns, paper money and stamps. He was sentenced to 11.25 years in prison.

**\*Wallace Murphy Plum** was accused in several Utah burglaries. He was convicted of the 1975 burglary of a coin store in Ogden, Utah. His sentence was one to 25 years in prison.

**\*The house of LaVere Redfield** was burglarized on February 29, 1952. A 400-pound safe was taken with perhaps \$1.5 million in cash, jewelry and negotiable securities. The safe was found in an abandoned mine shaft.

Charged in the case were :

**Anthony Gazzigli** was a Reno janitor who pleaded guilty, testified for the prosecution, and was given probation.

**Louis Gazzigli** pleaded guilty and received a sentence of one to five years in the Nevada State Penitentiary.

**Leona Mae Giordano** picked the pocket of Andreas Young and put stolen cash into circulation, received a sentence of a year-and-one-day. She was described in the press as a "shapely gambling house waitress."

**Marie Jeanne D-Arc Michaud** was accused as the ringleader. She received a

five-year sentence for transporting stolen property cross state lines.

**Benton Henry Robinson** was handyman at the guest ranch. He received a sentence of four years in the federal penitentiary.

**Frank Sorrenti** had his charges dismissed for lack of evidence.

**John Baptiste Trilegi** was from Milwaukee. In September of 1952, he received a prison sentence of one to five years. While serving time, he continued to receive workers compensation for an industrial accident.

**Andries R. Young** was also from Milwaukee. In 1939 he received a life sentence for a 1927 murder. In September of 1952, he received a prison sentence of one to five years

\***James J. Rewt** pleaded guilty to the August 8, 1961, burglary of H & R Enterprises in Belvidere, Illinois. His take was \$45 in rare coins of which \$30 was recovered. He lost the rest in a card game at a pool hall and spent it on food.

\*The El Dorado Rare Coin Exchange in Sedona, Arizona, was burglarized on May 27, 1987. The estimated loss was nearly \$500,000. It was suspected that the perpetrators were involved with several other burglaries.

**Richard Bruce Lee** was sentenced to 7½ years in prison as the mastermind of the Sedona burglary.

**Allen Scott Lloyd** pleaded guilty to one count of burglary and one of theft. He was sentenced on June 3, 1988, to two years in prison and required to pay \$70,000 in restitution.

Randall J. Bates was the third man suspected in the Sedona burglary.

\*The Pony Express Coin and Jewelry Shop was burglarized in St. Joseph Missouri, on October 28, 1988.

**Timothy W. Wilkinson** was sentenced to three years in the state penitentiary for

felony burglary. He was the son of a St. Joseph city councilman.

In 1990, Wilkinson was charged with assaulting a police officer.

**Paul A. Clark** was sentenced to three years in the state penitentiary for felony burglary but was placed on four years probation.

**Craig D. Hunter** pleaded guilty to felony burglary. He was sentenced to seven years in prison but placed on three years probation. He was ordered to spend 60 days shock time in jail and pay \$364 restitution.

**Willis Jones** pleaded guilty to the burglary and was sentenced to two years in the state penitentiary. Probation was denied.

\*There was a series of post office burglaries in 1978.

On January 3, the Post Office in Martinez, California, lost \$119,000 in cash, food stamps and postage stamps.

On February 18, the Post Office in Kent, Washington, lost \$127,000 in stamps.

On August 24, the Post Office in Ontario, California, lost \$161,000 in stamps and currency.

Postal authorities suspect that the burglaries may have been conducted by an organized group known as "The Bailey Gang."

The first arrest was made on December 6, 1978. **Frank Roza, Jr.** was the owner of Consolidated Coin Co. in Reno. He was charged under Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) statutes. He was accused as being a fence for the burglary ring.

The government's chief witness was William Eggers who had participated in the burglaries and granted immunity in exchange for his cooperation.

Roza was convicted, sentenced to fifteen years in prison and assessed a \$25,000 fine.

**Antonio F. Cerrito** testified in court that he had conducted burglaries of gold, silver and coins in Portland in 1978. Frank Roza had been a fence for the stolen goods.

He also testified that Roza had recruited him to kill a witness. Eventually Cerritos called it off.

**Dr. Benjamin P. Wright** was the ANA president in 1903. He had a coin collection burglarized on July 30, 1903. Thieves Harry Wildwood and Clarence Greagen took an estimated 2000 of his collection of 20,000

coins with an estimated value of a thousand dollars. They took off for Albany and attempted to sell the coins there without much success. In frustration they dumped some coins from a Hudson River ferry and others in a mill pond near Rennselaer. Some of the coins were recovered but most were lost.

### Coingate

“Coingate” is the nickname for a scandal involving theft from funds invested by the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation. The scandal spread to take down the leadership of the Ohio Republican Party.

**Timothy H. LaPointe** (b. 1/3/1947 d. 4/27/2023) was born in Chicago. He was with Old Roman Coin Exchange in New York City. Then in 1978 he joined New England Rare Coin Galleries in Boston. In 1989 he became director of sales for Ruffco Financial Services in Provo, Utah. In 1992 he was appointed executive vice president of Numismatic Investments of Ohio.



He was operations manager for Vintage Coins and Collectibles, owned by Tom Noe. He was indicted on one count of corrupt activity under RICO and six counts of record tampering. The charge of corruption was dropped in exchange for his testimony in the Noe trial.

At trial he testified that he created false invoices to indicate the company owned coins that they did not. When inspectors came to confirm the company assets, they borrowed coins from other dealers.

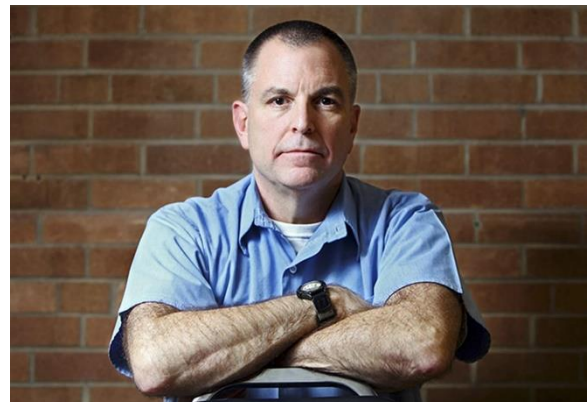
On November 27, 2006, he pleaded guilty to three counts of record tampering. On January 8, 2007, he was sentenced to three years in state prison.

LaPointe died in Chicago on April 27, 2023.

**Thomas W(illiam) Noe** (b. 7/19/1954) was born in Bowling Green, Ohio. He was married to Bernadette Restivo. He began dealing in coins in 1973. In 1975 he was partner with Bruce Amspacher in Numismatic Associates, and was president of Vintage Coins and Collectibles in Maumee, Ohio after 1979. He was also president of Numismatic Investments of Ohio after 1981.

In 1992, Noe was chairman of the Lucas County Republican Committee. In 1993, he was on the Bowling Green State University Board of Trustees. In 1995 he was appointed to the Ohio Board of Regents. He served as chair of the 2002 Ohio Commemorative Quarter Committee. In 2003 he was appointed to an 8-year term on the Ohio Turnpike Commission. He resigned on May 10, 2005.

In 1996 the Ohio General Assembly removed requirements for investment in bonds and opened the state to more speculative investments. Investment proposals were accepted from generous party donors. In 1998, the Ohio Workers Compensation Fund gave \$25 million to



Moe to invest in rare coins. An additional \$25 million was given in 2001.

The money was given to Moe companies Thomas Noe Inc, and Vintage Coins and Collectibles with subsidiaries Capital Coins Ltd. I and Capital Coins Ltd. II., and Visionary Rare Coins, Numismatic Professionals, Rare Coin Alliance and Karl D. Kirtzinger.

In 2004 Noe was appointed chairman of the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee. He resigned in May, 2005, when facing prosecution for various crimes.

In 2005, Noe was charged with illegal contributions to the Bush reelection campaign. He pleaded guilty on May 31, 2006. For this he was sentenced on September 12, 2006, to 27 months in federal prison. Imposition of the sentence was delayed until the resolution of other charges against him related to management of the rare coin funds.

Noe was a fund raiser and gave generously to the Republican party and local charities. After he received \$25 million from the Ohio workers Compensation Fund he gave \$50,000 to Catholic Youth Organization to fund a soccer field. In appreciation, the field was named for him.

Noe also gave \$34,000 to the University of Toledo. That included \$31,000 for half interest in a suite in the football stadium.

One of the subsidiaries, Numismatic Professionals, sent an 1855 \$3 gold piece and an 1845 \$10 gold piece to PCGS for certification. The coins valued at \$300,000 were lost in the return mail. A police investigation failed to recover the lost coins.

This loss led to an investigation of the investment and a series of articles in *The Toledo Blade*. An audit could only locate coins worth \$13 million from the \$50 million investment. This became known as the "Coingate" scandal.

In February 2006, Noe was charged in a 53 point indictment. This included:  
1 count of engaging in a corrupt activity.

1 count of theft of \$1 million or more from September 2003 through May 2005.

5 counts of grand theft.

6 counts of aggravated theft.

11 counts of money laundering.

8 counts of tampering with records.

22 counts of writing forged checks.

Noe was charged with mis-managing the funds. Noe was found guilty on November 13, 2006, of theft, money laundering, forgery and corrupt activity. On November 20, 2006, he was sentenced to 18 years in state prison.

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine commuted the sentence and Noe was released on April 21, 2020.

The broad "Coingate" scandal resulted in charges to 21 individuals and convictions of 19. Among those convicted was Republican Ohio governor Bob Taft. The scandal contributed to the election of a Democrat as the next governor.

The Ohio Workers Compensation Fund lost \$216 million dollars in the various high-risk investments.

Noe assets included a baseball bat used by Reggie Jackson and autographs from Mickey Mantle. Liquidation of assets seized from Noe yielded about \$55 million for the state. Although this was more than the state's investment, it was estimated that \$13 million to \$18 million in interest income was lost.

[Commentary] In theory, the Ohio Workers Compensation Fund invested \$50 million in rare coins.

What actually happened is that the fund gave \$50 million to Tom Noe to go play in the rare coin market.

The State of Ohio gave out money as political favors without appropriate regulation and without adequate oversight. Tom Noe used the money to pay off debt, for personal expenses and as working capital for his businesses. He comingled funds and comingled inventory.



Profits made on coin sales went to pay operating expenses and pay employees. Profit was not applied to the value of the investments.

False records concealed the value of the fund from auditors.

## Counterfeits

**Francis Leroy Henning** was a machinist in Erial, New Jersey. He produced copy dies and struck counterfeit nickels in various dates. The easiest to spot were 1944 nickels that lacked a mint mark on the reverse.

When these were discovered and reported in the newspaper, Henning left town. He was tracked down and arrested by the Secret Service in Cleveland on October 27, 1955.

Henning was sentenced to three years in prison with a \$5,000 fine. He received an additional three years for attempting to counterfeit \$5 bills.

It cost Henning three cents for each five-cent coin. It is estimated that he passed about 100,000 pieces before he was detected. To hide the evidence, he dumped 200,000 coins in Cooper Creek. A search by the Secret Service recovered about 14,000 pieces. He dumped another 200,000 coins in the Schuylkill River.

*The story was told in The Counterfeit 1944 Nickel by Dwight H. Stuckey.*

**Morton Christopher Goodman** (1925-1999) was a well-respected dealer and authority on error coins. He was a past Director of Research and Authentication of the Numismatic Error Collectors of America.

On December 4, 1969, a federal grand jury charged him with the production of counterfeit coins. The indictment stated that Goodman and Roy Earl Gray sold 2,300 fake 1969 double die cents to Sam Joudy for \$92,000. They also sold 330 fake dimes to William Raymond.

In 1970 he was sentenced to two years in prison for counterfeiting error coins worth \$100,000.

**Roy Earl Gray** (1949 ) was the son of prosperous parents living in a Pasadena

house overlooking the Rose Bowl. By age twenty, he had assembled an award-winning collection of error coins valued at \$600,000.

Gray put up part of his collection as collateral for a \$42,000 loan from coin dealers Todd Parker and Timothy Frein. Payment of the loan was due on June 3, 1969.

He was charged along with Mort Goodman of producing counterfeit error coins. In 1970 he was sentenced to two years in prison. Gray had previously been sentenced to five years in prison for soliciting the murder of two coin dealers.

**Vito D. Minella** was convicted of conspiracy to sell altered and counterfeit coins. He was a collector from Taylor, Wisconsin. In 1972 he was sentenced to four years in prison.

**Bernard Von Nothaus** was co-founder of the Royal Hawaiian Mint company, creator of the Free Marijuana Church of Honolulu, and founder of the National Organization for the Repeal of the Federal Reserve and Internal Revenue Code.



Von NotHaus was an advocate for a private voluntary barter currency and created "Liberty Dollars." He was convicted in 2011 on charges that the "Liberty Dollar" violated counterfeiting laws. He was sentenced to three years of probation, later reduced to one year.

Although they may be counterfeit, Liberty Dollars are highly collectible.

**Victor C. Piacentile** was charged with selling fraudulently altered 1964 cents as mint errors. He was sentenced to three months in prison and two years probation.

In 1992 he was charged with petty larceny for stealing football cards at a local mall.

**William Sheiner** was owner of the Bronx Coin Company. In 1967 he was charged with selling counterfeit mint error coins. He was sentenced to three months in prison and three years probation

**Charles Ebert (Shotgun) Slade III** (1935-2011) was an Orlando coin dealer with

Columbia Stamp & Coin Co. and a printer with Designers Press. He was a major distributor of numismatic accessories.

Secret Service agents raided the print shop on May 9, 1967, and confiscated counterfeit \$5 federal reserve notes. Some counterfeit notes would be easy to identify with a nude woman in place of Abraham Lincoln. Slade went into hiding and was arrested in Shreveport, Louisiana, on September 13, 1967. He pleaded guilty on November 9, 1967, to one count of counterfeiting and three counts of passing counterfeit notes. He was sentenced on March 21, 1968, to twenty years in prison.

### Disappearances

**Jack D. Hazelwood** was owner of Wichita Coin and Stamp Co. and the Spartan Coin and Stamp Co. President of HZD Enterprises, a coin wholesaler. Married with four children.

He disappeared on November 1, 1969. He left home in his car with a packed suitcase going to a coin show. His car and suitcase were found later at the coin shop.

Police believe he skipped to avoid debt. In 1977, a Kansas judge ruled that he was dead after being missing for seven years.

**William Heinrich** was a dealer with Bilinda Coins in Minnesota. Married to Linda. He disappeared in the 1980's.

**William G. Hesslein** (b. 1866 d. 1932) was a resident of New Haven, Connecticut, prior to 1914. Married to Clara in 1891. Dealer in

Boston. He conducted at least 53 auctions from 1907 to 1931. They were numbered up to 144. He issued fixed price lists numbered up to 30. In an ad in *The Numismatist* in 1929 he claimed he was the best known coin dealer in the United States. On February 29, 1932, the business was sold off at auction to pay off the holder of the mortgage. The business was purchased by J. F. LeBlanc and operated as Associated Coin and Stamp Company. He disappeared mysteriously in 1932.

**Charles Walsh** was an unmarried coin dealer. He disappeared from Jersey City in February 1978 after a bank clerk had deposited \$100,000 into his account in error.

He was apprehended in Portland, Oregon, in July and returned to New Jersey to face charges.

### Drug Trafficking

**William Thomas Lawson** was accused of distributing marijuana through his coin shop. A Circuit Court imposed a 70 year prison sentence in 1985 but that sentence was suspended. A District Court then imposed two years sentence.

**Robert Leon Mertens**

*The Spokesman Review*, December 14, 2004, page 11.

“A former gold and coin dealer, convicted last summer of drug dealing and firearms charges, was sentenced to 37 years in prison after claiming in federal court he had been set up by corrupt government officials.”

Robert Leon Mertens, described by federal authorities as having :an anti-government agenda, could have received life in prison, but U.S. District Judge Edward Lodge agreed to a defense request that changed the defendant's sentencing range to 292 to 365 months in prison.

The 47-year-old former owner of Northwest Coin and Jewelry in Coeur d' Alene was sentenced to 360 months on conspiracy and drug distribution charges. That sentence will be followed by 84 consecutive months for federal firearms violations."

Mertens served time at the Federal Corrections Institution (FCI) in Safford, Arizona.

**Errol Bernard Resnick** was convicted in 1969 on charges of illegally melting coins.

He was charged with attempting to smuggle Canadian gold coins into the United States.

In 1971 he was charged with illegally selling guns to out-of-state residents.

In 1971 he received a seventeen-year prison sentence as the mastermind of a marijuana smuggling ring.

Resnick was sentenced to die in the electric chair for the murder of a police informant, Clayton Eugene Walker. He was also charged in the murder of informant Howard Hartwig.

In 1973 the death penalty was commuted to life imprisonment when the U. S. Supreme Court struck down capital punishment across the nation.

In 1973 he was sentenced to additional five years in prison because of a prison break attempt.

He died on October 5, 2021.

**Joseph G. Snisky** was the owner of the Panther Valley Coin Exchange in the Church Hill Mall in Hazleton, PA. He also had a mail order business, the Panther Valley Coin Exchange at 53 E. Railroad Street in Nesquehoning, PA. That's for starters, there's more.

In 1968-69, he operated the Hazelton Coin Shop.

In April 1971, Snisky was elected auctioneer for the Nesquehoning Coin Club.

On October 26, 1971, Snisky was elected commander of the Nesquehoning American Legion post.

In 1975 he was placed on one year probation and fined for carrying firearms, dealing in lotteries and obscenity.

On April 24, 1975, Snisky and his wife Carol were tied up at the store while gunmen took \$30,000 in coins and \$2,300 cash.

In 1977, Whitman Publishing Company, Inc. was seeking \$2,109,92 owed by Panther Valley Coin Exchange.

On November 17, 1978, Carol was found dead in her car, an apparent suicide.

On February 12, 1980, he was arrested by postal employees and the U. S. Secret Service. He was charged with 23 counts of mail fraud, 9 counts of possession of counterfeit gold coins and 2 counts of possession of altered coins with the intent to sell. In May of 1980, he was sentenced to three years in prison and fined \$10,000.

In October 1981, he signed an agreement to stop selling through mail order.

On February 22, 1982, he surrendered to a U. S. marshal to begin a three-year prison sentence.

On April 28, 1989, Snisky was arrested and charged with 31 counts of drug trafficking, racketeering, receiving stolen property, criminal conspiracy, and violation of Gambling laws.

On May 28, 1991, Snisky was sentenced to 10 years and one month in federal prison and assessed a fine of \$10,000.

On August 31, 1991, Snisky was at Evangelical Community Hospital when he slipped past guards and escaped briefly before being recaptured.

On July 10, 1992, a suspicious fire was discovered at the former Tony's Market, owned by Snisky.

In March 2010, thieves broke a window in a car belonging to Joseph Snisky and stole gold and silver coins.

## Embezzlement

**Walter Norton Dimmick** (1857-1930) was chief clerk at the San Francisco mint. In 1901 he was charged with embezzling \$30,000 in gold coins from the Mint. His property was searched by Secret Service agents, furniture broken up and a piano dismantled. After three trials he was sentenced to nine years in San Quentin Prison. He was released in 1909 to go into the practice of law in San Francisco.

**John Ledyard Hodge** was born in Philadelphia on October 17, 1834, the son of William Ledyard Hodge, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. He attended Princeton University and was valedictorian of the class of 1853. He attended law school at the University of Virginia and was licensed to practice law in Philadelphia. He married Susan Savage Wilson and had five children.

During the Civil War, he served as a Major and paymaster with the Union Army.

In 1863, he was one of the founding members of the Philadelphia Numismatic Society and librarian. He was co-author of *Catalogue of American Store Cards*.

In 1871 he was charged with embezzlement (or defaultation) in an amount nearing a half million dollars. In 1872 he was pardoned by the president in exchange for testimony against others.

Hodge had a coin collection that was seized by the government. It was sold at auction by William L. Wall on October 23, 1871, with 44 lots. The two bidders were John Jay Knox and Ebenezer Locke Mason, Jr,

Hodge died on August 26, 1902.

## Bank Fraud

### Chen, Tzyy Bin

*Newsday*, August 20, 1992, Page 39.

"A Queens coin dealer was convicted yesterday in federal court in Manhattan of using counterfeit gold coins to secure \$13.3 million in loans from a California bank.

The jury required Tzyy Bin Chen 33, of Little Neck, to forfeit \$12.6 million that he received from the fraudulent scheme.

According to the U.S. attorney's office. Chen used gold-plated silver coins that he claimed were solid gold bullion as collateral to obtain the loans."

**Bruce McNall** was the owner of Numismatic Fine Arts on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills. In 1974 he paid \$420,000 for an Athenian Decadachma.

In 1986-88, he bought the Los Angeles Kings hockey team from Jerry Buss. In 1992 he was elected chairman of the National Hockey League board of governors. In 1994 he sold off controlling interest in the Kings.



Bruce McNall

On November 14, 1994, he was charged with defrauding \$236 million from six banks over the past ten years. One claim was that he borrowed \$15 million secured by coins that did not exist.

The charges extended to his employees and fourteen were charged in his schemes.

He pleaded guilty on December 14, 1994, to two counts of bank fraud, one count of wire fraud and one count of conspiracy. On January 9, 1997, he was sentenced to five years and ten months in prison and ordered to pay \$5 million in restitution. He was released from prison 2001.

**Mark Yaffe** was the vice-president of National Gold Exchange, Inc., (NGE) in Tampa, Florida. The company borrowed about \$35 million from Sovereign Bank secured by the company assets.



Mark Yaffe

National Gold Exchange was one of the leading firms in a wholesale business that is based on trust. That trust began to be questioned as NGE became slow to pay.

Yaffe lived in a 29,000 square-foot mansion in the Avil neighborhood of Tampa. It is the largest home in the county. The house was

designed to display his collection of music boxes, organs, pianos and automaton dolls.

Yaffe gave false reports to Sovereign bank to inflate the value of his assets. He withdrew \$3 million from his account and filed for bankruptcy in July 2009.

He was sentenced to 20 months in federal prison for conspiracy to commit bank fraud and ordered to pay \$3,049,581 in restitution to the bank.

Yaffe attempted to sell his \$25 million home to pay off debts but there was no buyer. Eventually it went back to Bank of America in a foreclosure action in 2013.

Vendors who had settled accounts in the 90 days prior to the bankruptcy were brought into the case in a process called “clawback” and billed for a portion of their transaction value. This group fought the action but lost.

[Author comment: I was employed by a dealer who did business with NGE and had shipped them coins within the 90-day period. My boss initially refused to pay but, like the others, was forced to pay.]

The Phoenix Gold Corp. rose from the ashes of NGE in August 2009.

## Fraud

**Richard Albright** was charged by NGC in 2023 with breaking coins out of NGC holders, replacing them with lesser value coins and selling them.

This was a civil case and not a criminal prosecution. The court issued an injunction to prohibit Albright from using the NGC name and logo to offer coins. He is also required to turn over records of sales.

### Isaac Binder

*The Detroit Free Press*, October 17, 1933.

“One of the 80 school teachers who made complaints against Isaac Binder, old coin dealer convicted of defrauding them in scrip

deals, obtained a \$305 judgement against him Monday”

**Jonathon Hefferlin** was the owner of Jonathon’s Coins in Inglewood, California, starting in 1963. In the 1970’s, he was a television commentator on channel KWHY-TV. He was a major gold dealer during the boom times of 1979-1980. In 1980 he began construction of a 15,000 square foot home with 15 bathrooms.

In 1981 he released a book, *Making Inflation Pay*. Then the market collapsed, he closed the shop in May and filed for bankruptcy.

On April 26, 1983, he was charged with defrauding 47 customers out of \$1.3 million.



In 1985 he was convicted and sentenced to four years in state prison.

**Robert Leroy Higgins** was affiliated with Certified Asset Management and First State Depository. On March 22, 2012, FBI agents raided the Baltimore Show and seized assets from First State Depository.



Bob Higgins

Higgins acquired coins with investor funds and used them as collateral for a loan. He showed coins at shows that were supposed to be pledged as collateral. Higgins filed for bankruptcy in May 2016.

On October 5, 2022, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission filed an enforcement action against Higgins. They accused Higgins of fraud in a multi-million dollar precious metal scheme and tax evasion.

The CFTC stated, "The orders find from approximately January 2014 through October 2022, Higgins, Argent and FSD, acting as a common enterprise, engaged in a fraudulent and deceptive scheme to solicit and misappropriate tens of millions of dollars in funds and silver from approximately 200 customers in connection with a fraudulent silver leasing operation known as the "Maximus Program.""

On July 3, 2023, the CFTC announced a consent decree ordering Higgins and his

companies to pay \$112.7 million in restitution to victims and an additional \$33 million civil monetary penalty. In addition, the order imposed a permanent trading ban.

In seven years after his 2016 bankruptcy, he built up a debt of \$146 million dollars.

**Donald Muniz** was operator of East Coast Coin Co. and Universal Coin Exchange in Eatontown, New Jersey. He was charged with embezzlement and obtaining money under false pretenses. He was sentenced in 1980 to 11 to 19 years in prison.

He had written a coin column for six eastern newspapers. He claimed he was a renowned expert on rare coins and former president of a numismatic society,

**Richard Scott** was the owner of Goldie's Coin and Stamp Center near Andrews Air Force base.

He was charged with swindling 150 investors on investments of \$7.5 million. One of his victims was author Tom Clancy.

Scott was in poor health with kidney and liver failure. In 2000 he was convicted and sentenced to eighteen months home detention.

**Hannes Tulving, Jr.** was charged with defrauding 380 customers out of \$15 million between August 2013 and January 2014. He was ordered to pay a \$10 million fine and serve 30 months in prison, followed by three years of supervised release.

**Terry Woodruff**, a Des Moines coin dealer, was convicted of writing a \$39,000 check to buy three bags of silver coins when he only had \$454 in his account. He was sentenced for up to ten years in the Iowa State Penitentiary in 1981.

### Mail Fraud

**Mason Buddy** was president of Eastern States Monetary Exchange. He was charged with bilking 80 clients out of more than \$200,000. In 1975 he was sentenced to three years in prison.

**Joel C. Caitech** age 19, pleaded guilty to a 1964 charge of mail fraud in Chicago. He advertised coin for sale under the name of Joel Day but never delivered. After collecting \$62,000, he took off for Brazil.

**Joseph Miller Calvert** committed a series of coin thefts in the Nashville area. At age seventeen he was charged with burglary of an auto parts store.

In 1965, police broke up a ring believed involved with 50 to 60 burglaries. It was believed addresses were taken from lists of coin club members in the area. A search of Calvert's home found stolen coins. At age 22 in 1966 he was charged with theft of a coin collection worth \$15,000. In 1967 he was charged with the May theft of a collection worth \$17,000. He was arrested 14 times in 1966 and 1967. Each time he was released on bond.

He was convicted of stealing from a Nashville coin dealer and sent to prison with a sentence of six to ten years. He began serving his term in November 1967. He escaped from the state prison on April 4, 1968.

In 1973 he was charged with nine counts of mail fraud. He was charged with advertising rare 1943 copper cents but delivering copper plated cents and offering 1972-P double-die cents but delivering ordinary 1972 cents. On August 16, 1973, he was sentenced to six years in prison.

His record of marriages is almost as long as his list of convictions. On June 13, 1963, he married Roxanne Miller and had a son on January 8, 1969. They were divorced on September 18, 1969. On December 9, 1971, he married Mary Elizabeth Ashburn. On December 21, 1973, he married Luanne Lynn Higdon. On January 27, 1982, he married Luanne Lynn.

On June 5, 1992, he began serving a twelve-year prison term for charges of grand larceny and theft of property from an elderly woman with alzheimers. His wife Luanne received a four-year sentence.

**Lawrence Corsa** of Federal Coin Reserve was convicted of mail fraud in 1977. He received a three-year prison sentence.

#### **Robert Duperton**

*Newsday* (Nassau Edition) May 23, 2001, page 28.

"The former owner of what federal officials described as interlocking "boiler-room" coin dealerships in Islandia has been convicted of bilking mostly elderly clients around the country of up to \$20 million.

**Robert Duperton**, 41, formerly of Smithtown and now Manhattan, was convicted of conspiracy and fraud Thursday in U.S. District Court in Central Islip. According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Demetri Jones."

**John Gulde** was the owner of Coin and Stamp Gallery in Phoenix, Arizona. He and David McHenry were charged with misrepresenting and selling overpriced silver dollars/

He was convicted in 1990 of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud. He was placed on five-years probation, fined \$10,000 and ordered to perform 200 hours of community service.

**Martin Eugene Haber** admitted that he defrauded more than \$1 million from customers on eBay. The U.S. Attorney received 188 complaints between May 2001 and January 2005 from customer who did not receive coins they purchased.

Haber pleaded guilty in June 2006 to six counts of wire fraud and one count of mail fraud. He was sentenced to 63 months in prison.

#### **Larry Lomaz**

*The Akron Beacon Journal*, October 12, 1973, page 39.

"Akron coin dealer Larry Lomaz, 21, has been convicted of mail fraud stemming from a charge he failed to send merchandise to mail order customers after receiving payment."

**David McHenry** was the owner of Arizona Rare Coin Exchange in Phoenix, Arizona. He and John Gulde were charged with misrepresenting and selling overpriced silver dollars.

He was convicted of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud. He was placed on five-years probation, fined \$10,000 dollars and

ordered to perform 200 hours of community service.

**Chrysanthos Nicholas**, a New York coin dealer, pleaded guilty to mail fraud in 2015 and was sentenced to 27 months in prison. He was ordered to pay \$250,000 in restitution.

**Harold Oliver** was an Akron coin collector charged in 1965 with seven counts of mail fraud for offering coins he did not possess.

**Earl Carlton Powell** was convicted on ten counts of mail fraud, one count of perjury and one count of obstruction of justice. He was charged in 1984 for making a false claim to an insurance company of the theft of a \$110,000 non-existent coin collection.

He received a prison sentence of four years and four months and a \$25,000 fine.

**Marc Rauch** was president of Federal Coin Reserve of Bayside. He was convicted in 1977 of selling coins that were misrepresented or overpriced.

**Sol Rauch** was an attorney affiliated with Federal Coin Reserve in New York. In 1977 he was convicted of mail fraud.

**Mary Elizabeth Rivers** of Des Moines was charged with mail fraud for offering Indian Cents at 15 for \$1 or 85 for \$5, with no intention to deliver. She was described as being 5' 1" tall and weighing 85 pounds. She was convicted in 1965 and sentenced to five years in prison.

Previously she had served time in the Federal Women's Reformatory at Alderson, West Virginia, for mail fraud and the State Women's Reformatory at Rockwell City on charges of larceny.

### **Jerry Kenneth Stroud**

*The Los Angeles Times*, July 11, 1969. Page 8

Coin dealer Jerry Kenneth Stroud, 35, of Orange, was convicted Thursday in U. S. District Court in Los Angeles of 22 counts of mail fraud and using a fictitious name in connection with a fraud."

Stroud was attempting to sell 1893-S silver dollars with the S mint mark added with solder. He also placed ads under the name of Bob Hays.

## **The Minnesota Problem**

**Author Comment:** For a long time, I was Historian for the Northwest Coin Club in Minnesota. In 2016, I wrote "A History of Twin Cities Coin Dealers" that was published on the club website. That project covered much of the same material as this current project.

During 2004, I was employed by Minneapolis Gold and Silver in Edina. The company's largest client was Investment Rarities, Inc. in Bloomington. Our office was in the same building as New York Mint which became part of Asset Marketing Services LLC. I had a general familiarity with telemarketers in the area.

From 2007 to 2020, I was employed at Grove Coin Company in Woodbury. I attended public meetings related to proposed bullion trade legislation. In 2015, I was a Certified Bullion Coin Representative and required to

comply with Minnesota bullion trading regulations.

In the 1960's and 70's, Minnesota was suspecting of leading the country in the production of whizzed coins. Whizzing was the treatment of coins with a wire brush to give the appearance of a higher grade. The term may also be applied to coins treated with a buffing wheel or some chemicals. While giving the impression of a higher grade, whizzing reduces the value of a coin.

A location in North Minneapolis has been mentioned in the discussion. There have been no prosecutions of dealers suspected of whizzing so no names can be mentioned.

It is generally agreed that modern numismatic telemarketing dates back to Jim Cook who opened Investment Rarities Inc. (IRI) in 1974. They have avoided



prosecution for their business practices. However, former employees left to set up businesses that did get in legal trouble.

The Minneapolis *Star Tribune* ran a series of articles in 2011 on fraud and corruption in the rare coin industry. The primary reporter was Dan Browning. He mentioned David Marion who left IRI to form a company with a similar name, International Rarities Corp. (IRC). Browning reported that Marion took the IRI customer list to get prospects. Browning also claimed that IRC had two dozen employees with criminal records.

Minnesota attorney general Lori Swanson took up the cause and promoted legislation to regulate the industry. The Minnesota legislature passed that bill in 2013. The law took effect July 1, 2014. It required licensing of dealers and employees with background checks to prevent anyone convicted of a financial crime in the past ten years from getting a license. It also required dealers to obtain a \$25,000 bond.

On August 31, 2022, the 8<sup>th</sup> U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals found that Minnesota Statute Chapter 80G violated the Dormant Commerce Clause. The Minnesota Department of Commerce has lost a series of appeals and enforcement actions are on hold. License renewals were not processed for July 1, 2023.

The numismatic crimes of dealers generally fall into a few types.

- I. Valuation Scams: Dealers offer coins that are over-graded and at inflated prices. This by itself is not illegal. It can be prosecuted when the dealer promotes the investment potential of these coins that are sold well above their current value. Convicted of this were Harold Kail (1985) and William Ulrich (1991).
- II. Non-delivery Scams: Dealers do not pay for coins received and do not fulfill paid orders. Convicted of this type of crime were Masmoor Khan (1996), Kevin Alger (2002), David Marion (2013), Tiffany Grady (2013), Jay Flynn (2015) and Dennis Helmer (2015).
- III. In a Ponzi Scheme, dealers guarantee profits and pay off early investors with money from later investors. This may also be called a pyramid scheme. Eventually the pyramid collapses and late investors lose their money. Perhaps the biggest Ponzi Scheme was perpetrated by Trevor Cook with accomplices Jason Beckman, Gerald Durand, Jon Greco, Patrick Kiley, and Christopher Pettingill.
- IV. Money laundering happens in many businesses. A case in Minnesota involved company owner Jay Anderson, sales representative Andrzej Dereziński, and customer Peter Miele.
- V. Selling counterfeit coins is one thing. Barry Skog sold counterfeit coins in counterfeit PCGS slabs (2019).

### Minnesota Dealers with Convictions

**Kevin Richard Alger** (b. 12/22/1969) was president of Alger International Rarities in Hill City, Minnesota. He joined the ANA in 1998.

A federal grand jury indicted him on September 20, 2001. In April of 2002 he pleaded guilty to five counts of mail fraud, two counts of money laundering, one count of interstate transportation of stolen property and one count of engaging in a monetary transaction in criminally derived property.

The Postal Inspection Service reported that he had deposited checks from 22 investors but failed to deliver the coins. He was sentenced to four years and three months in prison on August 14, 2002. He was also ordered to pay \$626,242 in restitution.

In 2023, Alger International Rarities appears to be operating in Bloomington.

**Jay B. Anderson** (b. 9/29/1939 d. 11/2/2014) was president of Northwest Territories Gold & Silver Exchange Corp.

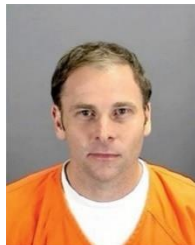


In 1986 the company was raided by federal agents. The Minnesota Department of Revenue filed liens against the company in 1986 for \$35,140 in unpaid sales taxes for 1977 through 1981.

On April 4, 1990 he was indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of conspiracy to defraud the Internal Revenue Service. He was accused of instructing dealers and investors of ways to avoid federal cash reporting requirements.

IRS investigators reported that the company created accounts in the names of Rob Roy, Tom Collins and Jack Daniels in one case and Tom Thumb, Geraldine Ferraro and Benjamin Franklin in another to conceal the names of actual clients.

**Jason Bo-Alan Beckman** (b. 12/14/1969) a/k/a Bo Beckman played hockey for the Air Force Academy and the University of Vermont. He aspired to buy a share in the Minnesota Wild.



He owned Oxford Private Client Group which was affiliated with Trevor Cook.

He was indicted February 22, 2012, on charges of mail fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit mail fraud and wire fraud and money laundering. It was alleged that between 2005 and November 2009, he defrauded investors in their \$194 million foreign currency trading scheme. He was convicted on June 12, 2012.

He was sentenced in U. S. District Court on January 3, 2013, to 30 years in prison.

**Michael W. Blodgett** (b. 7/22/1944) was president and CEO of T. G. Morgan in Wayzata. He joined the ANA in 1984 and 1985.

Blodgett spoke at investment seminars around the country. He sold coins at high markups and provided false "coin portfolio

updates" that were unrelated to the actual values.

On November 4, 1992, a federal grand jury indicted Blodgett with 27 counts of mail fraud, interstate transportation of stolen property and wire fraud. It was alleged the company sold coins at prices higher than their value and promoted these as good investments. It was claimed that he bilked 250 investors out of more than \$25 million dollars beginning in 1987.

The company filed for bankruptcy and the assets were liquidated to pay victims. Among the assets was a condominium in Ley Largo, a 25-foot boat, a 1988 Mercedes and hundreds of rare coins.

He was convicted on June 2, 1993, and sentenced to six years and six months in prison on October 21, 1993. He was also ordered to pay \$500,000 restitution to 250 victims.

After the trial he fired his attorneys and charged them with mismanaging the case.

He filed appeals that were denied and some declared to be frivolous.

He was released from prison on June 24, 1999.

**Trevor Gilson Cook** (b. 6/19/1972) was a salesman with Investment Rarities, Inc. Later he operated Oxford Global Partners. One Cook entity was known as Universal Brokerage Services (UBS).



He was charged in federal court on March 30, 2010, in what authorities called the second largest investment fraud case in Minnesota history.

Cook bought the historic Van Dusen mansion in Minneapolis and moved his office there in 2007.

An employee testified in court that that drinking and smoking marijuana were common during working hours. After hours, prostitutes were brought in for parties.

Court papers stated that he “defrauded investors by soliciting them to invest money in a foreign currency trading program that they alleged would earn a double-digit rate of return, typically between 10.5 and 12 percent annually, with little or no risk. They also claimed investor assets would be held in a separate account and could be withdrawn at any time. Those representations were false.”

Cook’s assets included a Rolls Royce Silver Spur, a Maserati Quattroporte, a Hummer H2, a Jaguar S-Type, and a Mercedes Benz 420SEL.

He bought an island in Canada and a two-person submarine to drive around the island. Somewhere there was a 60-foot houseboat.

He pleaded guilty on April 13, 2010, and was sentenced to 25 years in prison on April 24, 2010, for one count of mail fraud and one count of tax evasion. He was also ordered to pay \$158 million in restitution.

In 2023 he is in federal prison in Beaumont, Texas.

In 2020, the receiver closed the books on recovery efforts. They recovered assets of \$21.7 million, and after expenses, returned \$11.7 million to 700 investors who had collectively lost \$194 million. That is a return rate of about 8%.

**Andrzej Derezinski** (b. 4/24/1944) was a Polish Alpine skier who participated in the 1964 Olympics. He defected from Poland in 1970. In 1975 he was a skiing coach at Afton Alps. In 1977 he owned an Edina ski shop.

In 1986 he was a broker working with Northwest Territories Gold & Silver Exchange Corp.

It was alleged that between February and June 1986, he counseled Peter Meile to structure cash transactions to avoid financial reporting requirements. Another employee alerted authorities in the belief that Meile was concealing profits from drug dealing.

He was indicted by a federal grand jury on April 4, 1990, on charges of conspiracy to defraud the Internal Revenue Service.

In 2000, he was a skiing coach in Montana.

**Gerald Joseph Durand** (b. 3/30/1951) was at one time sales manager at Investment Rarities, Inc. He joined Trevor Cook at Oxford Global Advisors.

Durand promoted Cook’s foreign currency investment program with infomercials on AM radio and a Christian shortwave network.

While working for Treavor Cook, he was charged on February 22, 2012, with wire fraud, mail fraud, conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud, and money laundering. This was related to Cook’s foreign currency trading program. He was convicted on June 12, 2012.

It was alleged that Durand proposed to Christopher Pettingill that they arrange to have Bo Beckman killed to collect on his \$2.5 million life insurance policy.

He was sentenced in U. S. District Court on January 3, 2013, to 20 years in prison and \$155 million restitution.

**Michael Kevin Fitzpatrick** (b. 5/28/1960 d. 4/25/2016) was born in Manhattan and attended the UN International School. He was married three times.

He was arrested in 1993 in the apartment of Harlan Rosenfeld. He worked for Rosenthal at International Rarities Group. He also worked for Premier Investments in Apple valley. Although he qualifies as a Minnesota coin dealer, he is much better known for exploits outside of the field.

He was a New York classmate of Qubilah Shabazz, daughter of Malcolm X. at the U. N. International School.

Fitzgerald joined the Jewish Defense League in 1976. In 1977, he was convicted of throwing a pipe bomb into a Soviet bookstore. To reduce the charges, he became a government informant.

In 1995, Shabazz hired Fitzgerald to kill Louis Farrakhan who she blamed for the assassination of her father. She was unaware that Fitzgerald was an FBI informant who was recording their conversations.

He died of liver failure in Scottsdale, Arizona.

**Jay Philip Flynn** (b. 12/7/1963) a/k/a Nathan Johnson, worked with Tory Hughes at Reputable Rare Coins in Roseville. He is a cousin of Jamie Smith.

He was charged in U. S. District Court of defrauding elderly customers out of nearly \$345,000. The presiding judge noted that he had a prior history of armed robbery, drug possession, drug trafficking, check forgery and domestic assault.

On July 23, 2015, he was sentenced to 52 months in prison, ordered to pay \$200,000 in back child support payments and \$324,949 restitution to clients. He was released from prison on July 18, 2018.

**Tiffany Norwood Grady** (b. 7//1966) operated from home as the Stella Group.

In November 2012, she was ordered to stop operations by Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson. In May of 2013 she was ordered to pay back \$520,000 to her customers.

She was charged in federal court in March, 2015, with wire fraud. She was charged with taking money from clients between April 2011 and August 2012 but not delivering the merchandise.

Sentenced to 24 months in prison, she was released from prison on September 23, 2017.

**Jon Jason Greco** (b. 8/5/1970) was accused of helping Trevor Cook to conceal assets. These included \$10,000 in U. S. currency, foreign currency and precious metal coins. He lied to federal investigators that he had no knowledge of these assets on June 24, 2010. It was alleged that Greco placed assets in a locker at the Mall of America, which were later found to be worth about \$150,000.

He was indicted on March 13, 2011, and pleaded guilty in U. S. District Court to two counts of making false statements to federal agents. In November he was sentenced to ten months in prison.

**Robert Earl Gundy** (b. 10/26/1958) worked in the past for several firms including International Rarities Group, Midas Resources, PFG Coin and Bullion, American International Gold and Silver Exchange, and S & F Commodities. He was the owner of Crescent Equities in Minneapolis.



In 2003 he was sued by Midas Resources in Eagan for cheating Midas customers. They received a \$41,228 judgement against Gundy.

In March of 2012 he received a 14 month prison sentence for writing bad checks.

He pleaded guilty to a single charge of mail fraud. He admitted to stealing \$421,000 from clients. A Hennepin County district court sentenced him to 46 months in prison. He served in Ohio at Elkton Federal Correctional Institution and was released on November 7, 2018.

**Raymond Francis Hanisco** (b. 9/19/1950 d. 1/11/2014) was a salesman with Twin Cities Gold and Silver Exchange in Plymouth. He left in 2009 to join Schaun Waste as co-owners of Guardian Gold and Silver Exchange.



He joined the ANA in 1989 and was expelled in 2007.

Hanisco and the company were charged with bilking elderly customers on sales of coins and bullion. The company filed for bankruptcy in October 2012 with debts of \$1.7 million.

Schaun Waste was prosecuted but by then Hanisco was dead.

**Dennis Charles Helmer** (b. 2/3/1961) worked for National Rarities in the 1990's. When he left, he took the company call list with him.

In 2002 he was charged and convicted of two counts of theft by swindle.

In 2006 he worked for a firm called Best Price. He was charged with swindling more than \$70,000 from a 92-year-old California man.

His new company was Wholesale Assets Worldwide. LLC (WAW). He also used the names Jeff Jones, Dennis Dimon and :Mr. Diamond.

The U. S. District Court indictment stated, "From November 2009 to December 2013, Through WAW, Helmer contacted individuals, many whom were elderly, and persuaded them to send him money, coins, and precious metals, based on his false promises to provide money or coins in return. Some victims also relied on Helmer to provide safe storage for their coins. As part of the scheme, Helmer intentionally misled customers about the size and stability of his business, including providing them with copies of a false "Dun and Bradstreet Credibility Report," and stating that WAW had 75 employees and \$500 million annual revenue.

According to court documents, WAW received over \$1,2 million in coins, precious metals, and cash from victims, instead of fulfilling their orders, Helmer sold many of the coins and used customer money and proceeds from these sales to fulfill other orders, make payments to other customers, pay his own personal expenses, and attempt to fund start-up costs for another company, Smoke Shack, Inc."

After learning of the indictment, In January 2014, he moved operations to Florida and formed Best Price International.

He was sentenced in 2015 to 150 months in prison and ordered to pay \$1,329,873.25 restitution.

Helmer was released from federal prison on July 25, 2023.

**Tory Evan Hughes** (b. 12/8/1969) operated Reputable Rare Coins (RRC) in Roseville.

Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson filed suit in Hennepin County District Court on February 14, 2011. He was charged with mail fraud. He was charged with stealing

more than \$600,000 in cash and coins from customers. He failed to appear in court and was later arrested in Arizona.

He moved to Gilbert, Arizona, in November 2013. There he operated U. S. Collectibles and stole more than \$100,000 from customers. He was sentenced to 71 months in prison. He was released on August 28, 2020.

**Harold Berman Kail** (b. 2/27/1952) was owner of the Coin and Stamp Gallery, Inc. in St. Louis Park. He had worked for Investment Rarities Inc. but left in August 1983 and hired several former IRI salesmen to open his own company.

On March 7, 1984, U. S. District Court judge Miles Lord issued a temporary restraining order blocking mail to the firm.

He was indicted by a federal grand jury on September 20, 1984, on charges of grossly overcharging customers for old coins. He was convicted in May of 15 counts of mail fraud and ordered to pay \$501,738 in restitution. He was sentenced in June to seven years in prison.

This was a landmark case that established that the industry had grading standards and a company could be prosecuted for exaggerating the grades of coins sold.

**Masroor Ahmad Khan** (b. 2/22/1970) was from the United Kingdom. He hired sales brokers with customer lists from other firms and operated National Rarities of Apple Valley during 1995 and 1996.

He was charged in Dakota County District court on May 9, 1996. He failed to return coins sent for appraisal or pay for the coins. He accepted money for coin orders but did not fulfill those orders.

There were 40 to 50 victims with losses of \$500,000. He pleaded guilty in September 1996 to four counts of theft by swindle and one count of theft in 1996.

**Patrick Joseph Kiley** was the host of "Follow the Money" broadcast over a Christian network of 200





short-wave radio stations. He was associated with Universal Brokerage and worked with Oxford Global Advisors.

He was charged on July 20, 2011. He was sentenced to 240 months in federal prison on 12 counts of wire and mail fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud and two counts of money laundering.

In 2013 he charged his attorney with mishandling his defense.

He was in prison at the Federal Medical Center in Rochester and released May 18, 2021.

**Scott Michael Luther** (55 in 2018) was the owner of Luther Rare Coins (LRC Coins) of Minneapolis.

He was charged in 2018 with mail fraud and money laundering in the sale of more than \$1.5 million in coins between 2010 and 2013. He pleaded guilty on June 8, 2021, and sentenced to time served.

In response to an appeal, the court stated: "Luther is one of the most dishonest and manipulative defendants that this court has ever encountered; since long before he was indicted, he has done everything within his power to delay and manipulate these proceedings."

**David Laurence Marion** (b. 1960) bought International Rarities Group and renamed it International Rarities Corporation (IRC) in Excelsior. The *Star Tribune* reported they had more than a dozen employees with criminal records. He joined the ANA in 1989.

He had been a registered NASD securities broker but in 1991 he was fined, censured and barred for executing transactions without authorization.

He admitted that between December 2010 and August 2011 he received more than \$2 million in coins and money from customers but never fulfilled orders.

Also, as president of International Rarities Holdings (IRH) he sold shares in the company as securities. However, he was not registered with the Security and Exchange

Commission as a security trader. He collected \$1 million from 26 investors. His gambling losses were \$197,419.

He was sentenced on August 29, 2013, to 60 months in prison for one count of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud and one count of money laundering. He served at Duluth Federal Prison Camp and was released on March 3, 2017.

**Christopher Pettengill** (b. 12/22/1956) joined Trevor Cook and Gerald Durand as financial advisor for Oxford Global Advisors in 2007. Durand and Pettingill split from Cook in 2008.



He was charged in U. S. District Court on June 13, 2011, with one count of securities fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of money laundering. He pleaded guilty on June 21, 2011.

On January 3, 2013, he was sentenced to 7½ years in prison.

**Ron Peterson** was an alias for Barry Ron Skog.

**Harlan J. Rosenfeld** (b 7/23/1963 d. 4/18/2000) was the founder of International Rarities Group. In 2012 an article in the *Star Tribune* claimed that the company employed at least two dozen salespeople with criminal records.

In November 1993 police pulled him over in a traffic stop. He was charged with possession of cocaine found in the car. Four days later police raided his apartment and confiscated a 1989 Mercedes Benz, \$24,000 in cash, gold jewelry and 106 gold coins. He forfeited the property in September 1994.

When brought to trial, he claimed double jeopardy in that the forfeiture was already a strict penalty for the crime. The trial judge dismissed the charges on May 3, 1995. The Minnesota Court of Appeals reinstated the charges in December.

He was charged in Hennepin County with drug charges and not numismatic crimes.

He died of a drug overdose in 2000.

**Barry Ron Skog** (b. 9/3/1950) was the sole proprietor of Burnsville Coin Company. He advertised coins for sale through *Numismatic News*.



Court documents state: "In 2003, Skog, a life-long rare coin enthusiast, opened a business in Burnsville, Minnesota, which engaged in the sale of rare coins. Skog utilized the United States Postal Service to mail inventory lists to prospective customers and to mail coins purchased by customers. In 2006, the Better Business Bureau and local police began receiving complaints that Skog was selling counterfeit coins. In 2010, Skog was sued in federal court by Professional Coin Grading Service (PCGS), a manufacturer of tamper-proof plastic coin holders which are used in the industry to verify coins as authentic, for using imitation PCGS coin holders to defraud customers with counterfeit coins. Skog was enjoined from selling counterfeit coins or using real or imitation PCGS holders. Nevertheless, from 2012 to 2015, Skog sold counterfeit coins using the United States Postal Service. When law enforcement officers executed a search warrant for Skog's home, they found hundreds of counterfeit coins along with genuine PCGS coin holders. Two-hundred-and-seventy-five of the coins had been advertised as genuine in lists mailed to customers. If genuine, the coins would have been worth hundreds of thousands of dollars."

He pleaded guilty on February 21, 2019, to a counterfeit coin fraud scheme. On July 9, 2019, and was sentenced to 30 months in prison.

**Jamie Lee Smith** (b. 1976) operated American Platinum Gold and Silver in St Louis Park and American Independent Gold & Silver Inc, in Robbinsdale before 2014.

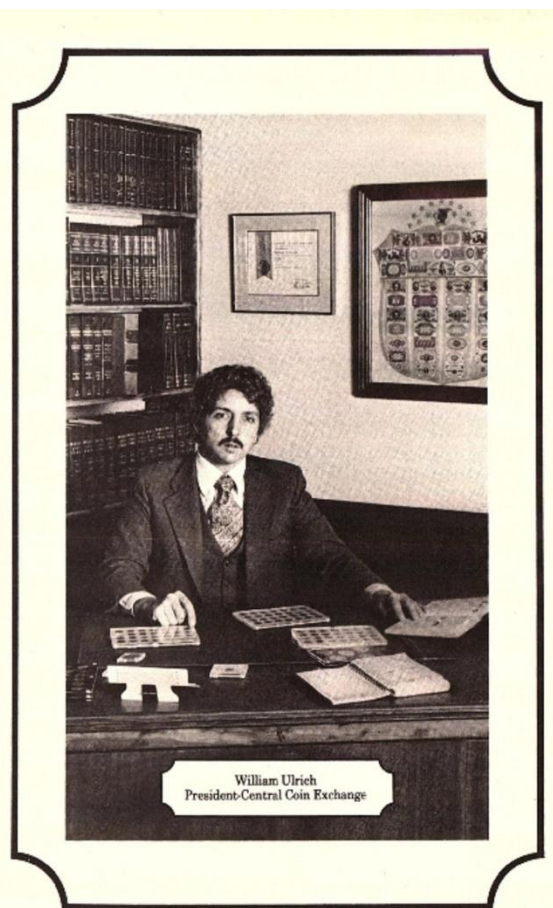
In 2012 he settled a lawsuit with an agreement that he would not engage in deceptive, fraudulent or misleading coin sales or appraisals.

He moved his business to Hudson, Wisconsin, after Minnesota banned former felons from the bullion trading industry.

On November 29, 2018, in U. S. District Court in Madison, Wisconsin, he was indicted on 23 counts of wire fraud, mail fraud and making a false statement on a loan application.

In December 2019 he was sentenced to 4.5 years in federal prison. He was ordered to pay \$1,137,099 in restitution.

**Michael Kevin Summers** was an alias for Michael Kevin Fitzpatrick.



William Ulrich - 1980 ad in *The Numismatist*

**William James Ulrich, Jr.** (b. 8/23/1948) was a second-generation Minneapolis coin dealer. He joined his father at American Coin Co. by 1971. Later he was the proprietor of Central Coin Exchange and Security Rare Coin and Bullion Corp. They opened their office in Shelard Plaza in 1983

and went out of business in 1989. At one time they had as many as a hundred employees.

Angela Corp was the parent firm for Security and was owned 70% by Ulrich and 30% by his daughters.

Security was investigated in 1986 for alleged fraud of 50 million dollars for selling overgraded coins. The company signed a consent order to refrain from fraudulent practices.

Ulrich had a home in Orono on Lake Minnetonka. A newspaper had this description:

“Built in 1986 at an estimated cost of \$6 million. The home has a 20-by-30-foot master bedroom with a 13-by-27-foot alcove. It has six other bedrooms, plus a 20-by-40-foot handball court. There also is an indoor swimming pool with a slide that sends bathers plunging into the water from the second floor. There is a bomb shelter and a soundproof shooting range.”

Authorities claimed the firm promoted coin sales at inflated prices and guaranteed profits that could never be realized.

In 1990. A district judge ordered Ulrich to pay \$11,185,848 as restitution to 25,000 investors who bought coins between 1985 and 1986.

In August 1991, Ulrich was charged with racketeering. A federal grand jury indicted him on 15 counts of mail fraud.

In 1993, it was charged that Ulrich’s law firm, Larkin, Hoffman, Daly and Lindgren helped to fraudulently transfer \$1 million in rare coins into trusts for his daughters.

National City Bank was charged with conspiring with the law firm.

In May 1991, Ulrich pleaded guilty of racketeering. He was sentenced to six years in prison on Friday the thirteenth of September in 1991.

He served his prison time in Sandstone, Minnesota, and was released from prison on April 7, 1995.

In May of 1995, Bill’s wife Mary incorporated Goldstar Estate Buyers Corp.

Ulrich was called a consultant for Professional Estate Buyers Group which was a trade name of Goldstar Estate Buyers Corp. They operated with a group of specialists in various fields who were buying for themselves and not for Ulrich.

**Schaun Keven Waste** (b. 12/20/1964) had been office manager for Twin Cities Gold and Silver (TCGS). He and Ray Hanisco were co-owners of Guardian Gold & Silver Exchange in Plymouth from 2009 to 2013.

TCGS sued Guardian claiming that they had taken the TCGS mailing list and used it to recruit customers. Guardian settled for \$35,000 in 2010 but violated the agreement by continuing to use the list.

He was charged by Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson with bilking elderly customers in sales of coins and bullion.

A Hennepin County judge ordered Waste in December 2015 to pay \$2 million in restitution and barred him from working in the industry for life.

### **Jeffrey Paul Wolfbauer**

(b. 11/23/1967) is a cousin of Ronald Wolfbauer and owner of Twin Cities Gold and Silver Exchange. He employed a dozen people with criminal records.



He was convicted of fourth degree sexual assault in 1992. He has other convictions for gross misdemeanors. He has moved to Arizona.

**Ronald Gary Wolfbauer** (b. 1/8/1962) was owner of International Strategic Assets, Inc. In 1990 he married Dawn Marie Erickson.

He was sentenced in 2006 to two years in prison and released on January 11, 2008. He was ordered to pay \$1,760,000 in restitution. In 2008 he returned to work for Investment Rareties Inc.

Dawn Wolfbauer started Nature’s Prime Organic Foods while Ron was in prison. In 2011 the company wrote \$40,000 in bad



checks for sponsors of the Basilica Block Party. Customer reviews were terrible.

### **Minnesota Enforcement Actions**

During the period from January 1, 2015, through January 2022, the Minnesota Department of Commerce issued 83 enforcement actions against bullion dealers. Out-of-state dealers were cited 49 times while Minnesota dealers were cited 34 times.

Of the out-of-state actions, 45 were for failure to register or conducting transactions while not registered. Only four were for actual violation of the regulations.

For the Minnesota actions, seventeen were for failure to register and seventeen were actual violations. Eight dealers were banned from the industry.

The Department of Commerce issued consent decrees and assessed civil penalties from \$250 to \$250,000. Some Minnesota violators also faced criminal prosecution and prison sentences.

**Theodore Anderson** was employed with Midas Resources.

The Department of Commerce charged on November 3, 2015, “MRI, Anderson and Huebner engaged in acts and practices that demonstrate they are incompetent, financially irresponsible, and otherwise unqualified to act under the authority of the Commissioner...”

The Department revoked Anderson’s license and prohibited registration for two years. It ordered MRI to pay restitution and pay a \$100,000 civil penalty.

**Leonard Lee Barber** (9/1960) was the owner of Barber Coins and Collectibles in Lakeville and a registered Minnesota bullion dealer but did not renew their license after June 30, 2019. He continued to do business after expiration of the license.

The Department of Commerce charged on June 9, 2021, that Barber did not pay for coins purchased or deliver coins sold. In a consent agreement, the state revoked the

license and ordered Barber to cease operations other than repayment to victims. It assessed a civil penalty of \$70,000.

**David Davenport** was a licensed bullion coin dealer representative employed by Asset Marketing Services LLC (AMS).

The Commerce Department charged him on March 30, 2017, with misrepresenting the investment potential for a coin. His license was revoked and he was assessed a civil penalty of \$5000.

The Commerce Department charged Asset Marketing staff with inadequate supervision of their employee. They were assessed a \$30,000 penalty.

Asset Marketing Service provided a full refund to the estate of the victim.

**Justin Luis Domnitz** was the owner of Presidential Precious Metals LLC (PPM), a registered Minnesota coin bullion dealer.

The Commerce Department charged on August 11, 2016, that they 1) improperly withheld, misappropriated and converted money received, and 2) engaged in various acts demonstrating they are untrustworthy, financially irresponsible or otherwise incompetent or unqualified to act, and 3) refused to allow reasonable inspections of records.

Their license was revoked, they were permanently banned and they were ordered to pay a \$30,000 penalty.

**Scott K. Fredin** was not charged under a company name. However, he was working for Bullion Exchange Services LLC,

The Department of Commerce charged him on July 24, 2017, with dealing in bullion coins without a license. He was also charged with misrepresenting the grade of coins sold.

He was banned from conducting business that would require registration and assessed a \$10,000 civil penalty.

**Dennis Charles Helmer** operated Wholesale assets Worldwide under the name of Jeff Jones.

The Commerce Department charged on January 14, 2015, “respondent has engaged in false, deceptive, and misleading practices in the selling and buying of bullion coins from November 2009 until approximately January 2014 resulting in a loss to consumers of at least \$1,200,000.” Additional charges go on for pages.

The Commerce Department used the 2014 law to charge for violations that occurred before passage of the law.

Helmer was permanently banned from bullion trading activities in Minnesota and assess a civil penalty of \$250,000.

He moved his operations to Florida. The U. S. District Court also convicted him, sentenced him to 150 months and ordered restitution.

**Scott Michael Luther** was owner of Luther Rare Coins and conducted bullion business without a license and without licensed bullion coin dealer representatives as salesmen.

The Commerce Department charged on April 25, 2016, that 1) They offered secure storage for customer coins, 2) they converted \$1.3 million in customer coins and used the funds for operating expenses.

The company was ordered to cease and desist and pay a penalty of \$250,000.

**Kimberly A. Malkow** was owner of Angelic Precious Metals LLC in Richfield and a licensed Minnesota bullion dealer.

The Commerce Department charged on August 1, 2016, that she acted as a straw dealer to allow another unlicensed dealer to buy, sell and trade bullion coins. Her license was revoked and she was banned from further dealing. She was also ordered to pay a civil penalty of \$10,000.

**Ira V. Sims** was the owner of Bullion Exchange Service LLC and a licensed Bullion Coin Dealer representative.

The Commerce Department charged on February 2, 2016, that he allowed an employee to substitute cleaned coins for promised BU coins. He also did not respond to Commerce Department complaints.

The license for the firm was revoked and Sims’ individual license was revoked. He was issued a cease and desist order and ordered to pay a civil penalty of \$50,000.

**Barry Ron Skog** was owner of Burnsville Coin Company. He was not registered as a Minnesota bullion dealer.

The Department of Commerce charged him on April 11, 2019, with dealing in bullion without a license. He was charged by the state, not for counterfeiting, but for false, deceptive and misleading practices.

He was ordered to cease and desist any further violations and assessed a civil penalty of \$50,000.

**Jamie Lee Smith** was the owner of American Independent Gold and Silver, Inc. (AIGS), American Platinum Gold and Silver, Inc. (APGS) and American Gold & Silver, Inc.

The Department of Commerce charged him on December 13, 2019, with several violations of the bullion trading laws. 1) He failed to register one of his companies. 2) He sold off coins that he was supposed to keep in storage for a customer. 3) He did not store customer coins as promised and did not return them as requested. Instead, he sold off some of the coins and attempted to replace them with inferior coins. 4) He misrepresented the investment value of coins and failed to pay for customers coins that he sold. 5) He used business funds for personal expenses and a company credit card for personal purchases.

In a 2019 consent order, Smith was banned from doing further bullion business in the State of Minnesota and assessed a penalty of \$100,000.

He moved his business to Hudson, Wisconsin, where he faced criminal charges,

conviction and received a prison sentence.

## Money Laundering

**Ronald W. Bernstein, Grant Boshoff and Lawrence Spencer** worked at Bernstein, McCaffrey & Lee.

They were arrested in December 1989 in an IRS sting operation. The phony buyers claimed to be a bookie with proceeds from illegal gambling. The three were convicted of federal money laundering charges

**Mark Chrans** was convicted of fraud and perjury in a case that involved concealment of Cocaine profits in 1981.

He was hired as a manager for Tom Noe.

### **Leon Hendrickson**

(1926-2017) was a well-respected and honored dealer with Silvertown Coin Shop in Winchester, Indiana. He was president of the National Silver Dollar Roundtable 1991-1992. He was president of the Central States Numismatic Society 1986 to 1998 and President of P.N.G. 1985 to 1989.



Leon Hendrickson

He received an ANA Medal of Merit in 1990. In 1991, he was named a Numismatic News Numismatic Ambassador.

He was convicted of eight counts of money laundering in 1993 and sentenced to five months in prison.

Also convicted in the case were David J. Hendrickson, son of Leon, and Stanley R. Hendrickson, Leon's brother.

Silvertown sold gold coins to trend Precious Metals, a company owned by Stephen Saccoccia.

**Walter Perschke** (1939-2016) was born in McHenry, Illinois. He bought a Brasher Doubloon and put it on a national tour in

1987. He also owned a 1783 Nova Constelatio Type II pattern.

He was indicted for smuggling Australian gold coins into the U. S. in 1969. He pleaded guilty and paid a fine of \$2500. He received a three-year suspended sentence.



Walter Perschke

He made two cash sales over \$10,000 to an IRS undercover agent and failed to fill out the proper forms. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to six months in prison in 1992.

He died in Chicago.

**Stephen Saccoccia** was affiliated with Saccoccia Coin Co. and Trend Precious Metals in Cranston, RI, and International Metal and Clinton Import/Export in Los Angeles. He was sentenced in 1993 to 660 years in prison for laundering millions of dollars for Columbia drug lords. In 2024, he is at Coleman Penitentiary in Florida.

Saccoccia received bundles of cash from the drug dealers. He used the cash to make undocumented purchases of gold. That gold was sold to legitimate buyers who paid with cashier's checks that could be deposited in various banks.

By November 1991, fifty people had been charged in the case.

**Donna Saccoccia**, Stephen's wife, was convicted of one count of conspiracy and 50 counts of falsifying bank records. She was sentenced to 14 years in prison and released in 2004.

**Barry Slomovits**, a New York diamond dealer, was indicted in the case. He became a government witness for the prosecution.

Jose Duvan Arboleda Gonzalea represented the Cali Cartel. He was indicted but out of reach in Bogota, Columbia.

### **Richard William Rosenbaum**

*Detroit Free Press*, December 26, 1993, page 22.

“Birmingham coin dealer Richard William Rosenbaum won a \$3.1 million police brutality case in federal court in Detroit in 1988.

In the same courthouse Monday, a jury convicted him for his role in a money laundering scam that involved two people authorities described as organized crime figures.

Rosenbaum who sold Birmingham Stamps and Coins last year, was acquitted on the more serious charges of money laundering.”

## **Attempted Murder**

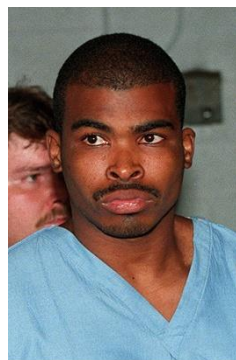
**Claude Russell Wise II** was sentenced to 15 years in prison for the August 4, 1988, attempted murder of Randy Block. Charges included attempted murder, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, aggravated assault, and possession of hollow-tipped bullets.

**Randy Block** was the owner of Raab Coin Shop in Flemington, New Jersey. He was shot in the shoulder during an argument in his shop.

## **Murder – Killers and Accomplices**

**Seifullah Abdul-Salaam** was convicted of killing New Cumberland, Pennsylvania, police officer Willis John Cole in 1994. He was given the death penalty.

His death penalty was overturned in 2018. The case remained active in August 2023.



Seifullah Abdul-Salaam

**Kenneth Derek Allender** (1945- ) went on trial for the 1975 murder of Emmet Jeffreys in St. Petersburg, Florida. He was charged with attempted robbery and first-degree murder.

The defense claimed that, although Allender participated in planning the robbery, he backed out at the last minute and tried to stop it. Prosecutors claimed he then had the responsibility to call police or warn the victim. The jury acquitted him of the charges.

He was returned to Madison, Wisconsin, to face drug charges in an unrelated case.

**Lynwood Scott Anderson** was convicted of second-degree murder in the 1994 case of police officer Willis John Cole. He was sentenced to life in prison.

**John Steven Barnes** was born on April 5, 1961.

He was arrested in the 1980 death of Walter F. Nickerson. He turned state witness against Arthur David Mirabal who was sentenced to life in prison. After his testimony, Barnes was released on five years probation.

In 1982, Barnes was arrested for breaking into a house through the doggie door to steal silverware, jewelry, credit cards and coins. He was caught with a pillow case bulging with loot.

While out on bail, he returned to break into the same house again and stole property worth \$25,000.

For these burglaries, he was sentenced to six years and eight months in state prison.

He died on October 26, 1995.

**Michael Scott Behn** was born on July 3, 1967.

He was charged, convicted and sentenced to life in prison in 1997 for the 1995 death of Robert C. Rose.

In 2005, the conviction was overturned and he was granted a new trial. At the first trial, the prosecution introduced a report from the FBI linking lead from the murder bullets to lead bullets in Behn's possession. Such identification was determined to be faulty and the FBI stopped using such tests.

In 2007, he was again convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

In 2023 he is in New Jersey State Prison.

**Kayla Kristina Blankenship** (1996- ) was sentenced to 45 years in prison for the 2020 murder of Indianapolis coin dealer Paul Edmunds.

In 2023, she is at New River Valley Regional Jail in Dublin, Virginia.



Kayla Blankenship

**Charles Michael Breon**

(1943- ) was charged with armed robbery in the 1972 case of Willis Smith of East Liverpool, Ohio. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

**Clyde Therone Walker Burns** (1940-1992) was born in Clay County, Texas, on September 2, 1940. He married Tanya Ann Thompson on February 20, 1966. They had a son seven months later. He married Peggy A. McIntosh on September 24, 1971. They had a daughter nine months later. He and Peggy were divorced on October 24, 1976, after he was charged with murder.

On December 21, 1974, Burns broke into Metallic Development Corp of Wichita, Falls. He took more than \$25,000 worth of gold, silver and palladium.

On March 11, 1975, he was arrested and charged with burglary at Buz Sawyer Coins. A hole had been cut in the wall and an alarm system activated. Burns was found with a duffel bag full of silver coins.

He admits to committing 150 to 200 burglaries during 1955 to 1975. He received a twenty years sentence for his involvement in the 1975 death of James Keith.

Burns died on April 27, 1992.

**David Robert Campbell** was implicated in the 2003 death of Jordan Allgood. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to five years to life.

**Christopher M. Caudill** was the brother of James and charged as an accessory in the 2015 murder of John M. Turner. He had an extensive criminal record.

**James Matthew Caudill** (1994- ) was born in Lawrence, Kentucky, on November 25, 1994.

He was convicted in the 2015 murder of John M. Turner in Austin, Indiana. He was sentenced to 85 years in prison.

**Patricia A. Caudill** was the mother of James and charged as an accessory in the 2015 murder of John M. Turner.

**Paul Chambers** pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the 1972 death of William Rue. His sentence was one to twenty years but he was released after just four months.

**Joseph W. Chesnulavich** (20 yo in 1966/1946) pleaded guilty of manslaughter in the 1966 murder of Mary E. Hamilton, 73, who was found dead in her third-floor apartment. For this crime he was sentenced to 10-20 years in prison.

He also pleaded guilty of second-degree murder for beating and cutting the throat of his cousin, Barbara Ann Comeau. A coin collection worth a hundred dollars was taken. For this crime he was sentenced to life in prison.

He committed suicide while in Walpole Prison on January 9, 1973.

**Benjamin Franklin Christian** pleaded guilty to hindering the apprehension of a murder suspect in the 1984 case of Darrell M. Robinson.

In 1985, Christian was charged with possession of explosives and a machine gun.

He received a two-year sentence to be served consecutively with a previous sentence.

**James Timothy Clotfelter** (1953-2014) was born on July 18, 1953.

He pleaded guilty to first degree murder in the 1984 death of Roger Kirby and was sentenced to life in prison.

He died in Knoxville in 2014.

**Winford John Conley** was convicted in the 1972 death of William Rue. He was sentenced to life in prison and was released after seventeen years and five months.

**Kimberly Carol Conner** was a model and aspiring actress. She was charged with murder, armed robbery, grand theft, burglary and unlawful flight to avoid prosecution in the 1975 death of John H. Stillman. In September of 1975 she was sentenced to life in prison.

**Ronald Cooper** was owner of Numismatic Gallery in Harrisburg, PA. He was charged with conspiracy in the 1971 death of Raymond J. Ferns. He was released for two days to process orders received at the shop. He received a sentence of 6 to 15 years.

**Ginger Lee Cox** was the girlfriend of James Caudill and charged as an accessory in the 2015 murder of John M. Turner

**Joseph D. Crane** (45 yo in 1972/1927) was charged with the 1972 murder of Willis Smith. His October 1975 trial ended in a mistrial when a jury could not reach a decision. In his second trial in November 1975, he was convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

**Donald Everett Cronk** (1955- ) was suspected of involvement in the 1980 murder of coin dealer James Milton Allen. He was wounded during the robbery and

sought medical treatment. He was not quickly located and placed on the *Sacramento Bee's* Secret Witness list.

He was taken into custody while working at a carnival at the Minidoka County Fairgrounds in Idaho in July 1981.

Crock made a plea agreement to avoid a death penalty. On June 8, 1983, he was sentenced to 27 years to life in state prison.

**Powell Clayton Crosby** (1924-1977) was charged as an accomplice in the murder of Ray Yablun. He committed suicide on September 15, 1977.

**Joseph P. Cruz** (28 yo in 1993/1965) was arrested with stolen property from Fremont coin dealer Ron Miller.

**Earl Howard Culwell** (1942-2006) was born on July 21, 1942. He was the former owner of the Zero Lounge in Wichita Falls. He had a record long enough for two people with the same name.

In 1958 he stabbed and killed his stepfather with a kitchen knife. In 1959, a jury determined that he was not a delinquent juvenile.

In 1976 he was arrested and charged with burglary.

He was married to Janie in 1961 and divorced in 1975, married to Peggy in 1968 and divorced in 1981; married to Lola in 1983; and married to Judy in 1992. Somewhere along the way he had children with various wives.

He was part of a burglary ring that was implicated in the 1975 death of James Keith.

Culwell died on April 25, 2006. His obituary had nothing but good things to say about him.

**Damien Cuomo** (1961-1989) was born on September 10, 1961.

He was an accomplice of Gary Charles Evans in the 1989 murder of coin dealer Douglas J. Berry in Watertown, New York.



On December, 27, 1989, Evans shot and killed Cuomo to keep him from talking.

**Stephen DiSantis** (1949-2002) was born on January 31, 1949, in Sacramento, California. On February 21, 1981, he married Gaila J. Ball.

His prior convictions included grand theft auto and receiving stolen property in 1967, first degree robbery in 1973, escape from state prison in 1975, and robbery with use of a firearm in 1977.

He was charged in the 1981 death of Edward Everett Davis. He was convicted and sentenced to death in 1986. A 1992 appeal was denied.

He died in prison of natural causes on March 2, 2002.

**Ryan Anthony Efird** was born on November 20, 1968.

He was arrested, charged and convicted of first-degree murder in the 2013 case of Albemarle, North Carolina, coin dealer Eldred Roger Gibson.

In 2023 he is serving out a life sentence in Central Prison, North Carolina.

**Forest Leon Ethington** (1938-2019) was born in Dallas on November 2, 1938. He married Kathleen Phillips on July 22, 1963 and their son was born in 1968. They were divorced on June 6, 2001.

He was implicated but never charged in the disappearance and 1984 murder of William Arthur Fiegner.

He was implicated in the 1985 murder of Robert Rosberg. In 1987 he was convicted of aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon. On February 17, 1987, he was sentenced to life in prison.

His crimes were not limited to burglary and murder. In 2010, he was convicted of aggravated sexual assault of a child.

Ethington died in prison in October of 2019.

**Gary Charles Evans** was born in Troy, New York, on October 7, 1954.

On January 13, 1977, he was sentenced to Clinton Correctional Facility for a burglary. He was paroled on March 31, 1980.

He scaled the wall of the Rensselaer County jail and escaped on June 12, 1980.

On February 15, 1985, he burglarized a flea market with his partner Michael Falco who disappeared.

He admitted to police that he killed his childhood friend, Michael Falco, in 1985. He buried Falco in a swamp near Lake Worth, Florida.

On September 8, 1989, he and Damien Coumo robbed and killed coin dealer Douglas J. Berry,

On December 27, 1989, Evans killed Cuomo and buried his body.

On October 17, 1991 he robbed and killed coin dealer Gregory Jouban in Little Falls, New York.

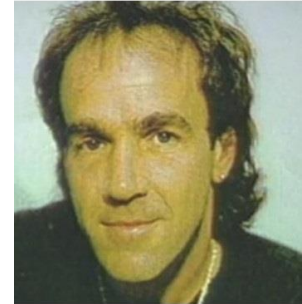
On March 20, 1994, he stole a valuable copy of Audubon's *Birds of America* from a Woodstock, New York, library. After this, he was released from prison on June 6, 1996.

On October 3, 1997, Evans killed his partner Timothy Rysedorph and cut him up with a chain saw.

On August 14, 1998, he was being transported to the Rensselaer County jail in a prison van. He was wearing handcuffs and leg shackles but managed to kick out a window of the van,

He jumped out of the window and over the guardrail of the Troy-Menands bridge into the Hudson River and to his death.

**Alton Woodruff Fancher Jr.** (1951-2017) was born on August 24, 1951. He was married with a daughter.



Gary Charles Evans

He conducted burglaries at the direction of James F. LeBus. He was implicated in the 1975 death of James Keith. He received a prison sentence of 5 to 12 years.

He died on May 10, 2017.

**Alfio Anthony Ferro** (1918-1993) was born in New York City on June 25, 1918. He worked as a gypsy cab driver and worked at a used furniture store and for a moving company and identified targets for robbery.

He pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in the 1974 murder of Earle Sherwood. He agreed to testify against his accomplices.

He testified that he gave John Schoonmaker \$500 to finance the trip to Florida and agreed to buy any jewelry taken in the robbery. When Schoonmaker returned, he said the robbery was not successful. He did not mention the murder.

On December 5, 1975, Ferro and Thomas Lewis broke into the home of Lillian Shur (77) and robbed furs, jewels and paintings. Miss Shur was suffocated. For this, Ferro received a sentence of 15 years to life.

In 1985, he was released from prison at the end of his sentence in the Shur case. Prison authorities had lost the paperwork requiring Ferro to be turned over to Florida authorities in the Sherwood case.

Ferro died on August 15, 1993.

**John B. Fisher** was charged with receiving stolen property after the 1979 murder of John Turner and three others. He received a five-year prison sentence.

**Joseph Flouta** was born in Guam. An item in the August 1995 issue of *The Numismatist* stated that Joseph Flouta was sentenced to 15 years to life in prison for the death of Fresno coin dealer, Ron Miller. This was not confirmed in contemporary newspapers.

Other records show that he was 16-years-old at the time of the crime. He was sentenced in 1994 to 15 years to life. He was declared eligible for parole in 2010 but California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger reversed the decision. The California Court of

Appeals reversed the decision of the governor.

**Bobby Ray Ford** (1964) was born in Jefferson City, Tennessee, on December 16, 1964.

He pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in the 1984 death of Roger Kirby. He received a 40-year prison sentence. He waited in the car while two others killed Kirby with a sawed-off baseball bat.

He died at home in Jefferson City on December 30, 2019. [questionable, see FindaGrave]

**Jashua Michael Garcia** (1991-) was born on November 7, 1991.

He was charged with a 2016 robbery at Bill's Coin and Jewelry in Jackson, Mississippi. He was sentenced to three life terms in prison for the robbery and murder of three.



Joshua Michael Garcia

In 2023 he is at the Maryland Correctional Training Center in Hagerstown, Maryland.

**Michael Jerome Gates** (1949-1975) was born in Cuba City, Wisconsin, on June 5, 1949.

He is believed to be the killer of coin dealer Emmet Jeffreys during a 1975 robbery in St. Petersburg, Florida.

He was found four blocks from the scene of the crime with a self-inflicted gunshot wound. He died in a hospital the following day, June 16.

**Maksim Gelman** was born in Ukraine on May 31, 1987. He came to the United States in 1996 and became a



Maksim Gelman



citizen in 2005.

He was a spree killer.

On February 11, 2011, he stabbed his stepfather, Aleksandr Kuznetsov, 55 times resulting in his death in their apartment in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn.

He stabbed Anna Bulchenko, the mother of a girl he liked. Later he returned and stabbed Yelena eleven times, resulting in her death.

Driving away, he ran into the car of Arther DiCrescento and stabbed him three times and stole his car.

A mile away he hit and killed coin dealer Stephen Tanenbaum who was crossing the street to get to his bank.

He slashed a livery cab driver, Fitz Fullerton. Then he slashed Sheldon Pottinger and took his car.

Police captured him after another confrontation in the subway. On November 30, 2011, he pleaded guilty to all charges. He was sentenced to 200 years in prison.

In 2023, he is in prison in Elmira, New York.

**John Kelly Gentry Jr.** was a suspect in two 1983 murders. It is alleged that he was romantically involved with both of them at the same time. By 1983 he was out of prison for nearly killing a former boyfriend.

The first victim was 25-year-old Barbara Gerber who worked at the Lucas County Jail in Toledo, Ohio. She was killed in Deerfield, Michigan, on April 12, 1983. She was stabbed 32 times with a kitchen knife. Her 1981 Buick regal was missing.

The second was coin dealer William B. Veith in Toledo, Ohio.

Gentry disappeared and has been a fugitive from justice since 1983.

**Kevin Gentry** An item in the August 1995 issue of *The Numismatist* stated that Kevin Gentry had received a sentence of 29 years for the death of Fresno coin dealer, Ron Miller.

**Robert Goldstein** was manager of Numismatic Gallery in Harrisburg, PA. He was charged with conspiracy in the 1971 death of Raymond J. Ferns. He received a sentence of 7 to 15 years.

**Edward L. Graham** was sentenced to life in prison in the 1984 case of Darrell M. Robinson in Kentucky.

**William Rogers Hanna** (1933-2011) was born on August 6, 1933. He was convicted of second-degree murder in the deaths of four people in a coin shop

in Lee Center, New York, in 1979. He received four sentences of twenty-five years to be served consecutively at Attica Correctional Facility,

He died in prison on July 19, 2011.

**Joseph Maurice Harris** (1956-1996) was born in jail in Clifton, New Jersey, on March 18, 1956, and abandoned by his mother,

He was suspected in the 1988 murder of coin dealer Roy A. Edwards. Harris had lost \$10,000 invested with Edwards.

Harries was fired from his job as a mail handler in April 1990.

On October 10, 1991, Harris, armed with a machine gun, grenades and a samurai sword, killed a former supervisor, Carol Ott, and her boyfriend in Wayne, New Jersey. He then killed two mail handlers at the Ridgewood post office. For these crimes he was sentenced to death in 1992.

He died in prison on September 23, 1996.

**Crystal Anne Hendrix**, was born in Tarrant, Texas, on July 13, 1987. She was charged in the 2018 death of Fort Worth coin dealer Gary Duke. She drove her Honda Odyssey van and waited outside. She cooperated with police.

**Jonathon Herrera** was born on December 22, 1996.

He was charged with first-degree murder, burglary and armed robbery in the 2016 death of Petro Rymar.

On March 24, 2016, he broke through the roof of Archie's Precious Metals and stole numerous items.

On April 1, 2016, he was buzzed into Bart's Coins and Collectibles by Petro Rymar. He stabbed Rymar several times in the chest and stole items from the vault.

He used a stool to break a window and left the store where he was seen by multiple witnesses.

In 2023 he is in Graham Correction Center.

**Michael Heston** (30) was implicated in the 1985 murder of Robert Rosberg. He pleaded guilty to robbery and was given a 20-year sentence.

**Steven Paul Higuieret** (1949-2017) was convicted in the 1978 death of Stanley W. Pierce and received a twenty-year prison sentence.

He was born in San Francisco on June 9, 1949, the son of a parcel post driver.

Steven married sixteen-year-old Penny G. Collado on June 9, 1967. They were divorced in May of 1969.

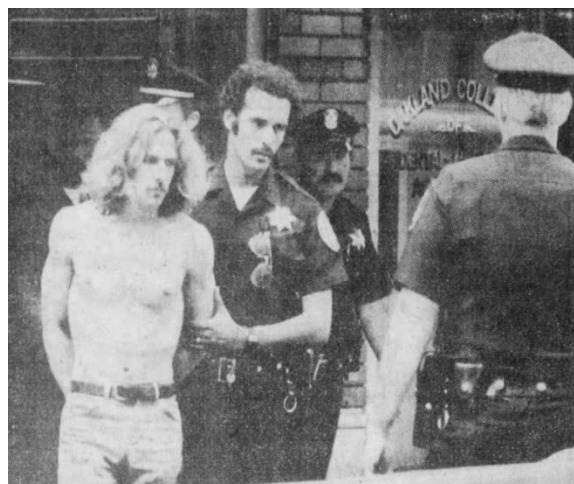
Higuieret was a drug addict who used marijuana, amphetamines, cocaine, barbiturates, and LSD but was addicted to heroin.

In 1971 he was booked into the San Mateo County Jail on narcotics charges. On July 12, 1971, he put on the clothes of his cellmate, Alan Vincent, who was due to be released. When guards called Vincent's name, Higuieret responded and walked out of jail. He was recaptured in San Francisco on September 11.

Steven was released from state prison in March of 1978 and resumed his heroin habit, which he supported with two or three burglaries a day.

On June 7, 1978, he burglarized a home and took a coin collection, jewelry and a TV set. In a closet he found an Erma LA 22 automatic pistol.

One week later he waked into the California Coin Shop in Oakland. He handcuffed



Steven Higuieret taken into custody on June 14, 1978.

Robert Drummond the owner, had him lie on the floor and began to fill a bag with gold and silver.

Stanley Pierce had the misfortune to come into the shop during the robbery. When Higuieret ordered him to assist filling the bags, he refused and turned to leave. He was shot and killed.

Police responded to a silent alarm and a four-hour standoff followed. When Higuieret attempted to escape through a roof vent, Drummond escaped and Higuieret was captured.

In 1979 he attempted to escape from the Alameda County Courthouse with a rope ladder made of bedsheets.

He married Josephin A. Ortolano on April 1, 1980.

A parole hearing was held in March of 2009 but the board found him unsuitable for parole.

In 2011 he was a prisoner at High Desert State Prison in Susanville, California.

Higuieret died on October 27, 2017.

**Clay E. Holbrook Sr.** (40 yo in 1987) pleaded guilty September 1, 1987, to felony murder in the case of Darrell M. Robinson.

He was sentenced to 20 years in prison to be served concurrently with a 10-year sentence in another crime.

**Vernon Dale Holbrook** was implicated in the 1984 death of Darrell M. Robinson. In 1985 he pleaded guilty of four counts including the transportation of stolen property, a conspiracy to kill a federal witness, setting fire to the Ashland Lounge, and theft of a truckload of television sets. He received a sentence of 15 years in prison.

**Erasmus A. Iannaccone** ( -1982) was the owner of Nassau County Rare Coin Co. in Franklin Square, Long Island.

He was charged in a 1966 plan to burn down a house to collect the insurance payment.

He was charged with conspiracy in the 1971 murder of coin dealer Raymond J. Ferns. He received a suspended sentence of 7 to 15 years.

**Andrew Jackson** (26) was arrested and charged in the 2011 death of Steven M. Halfon.

**John Jarvis** was charged with receiving stolen property in the 1984 case of Darrell M. Robinson.

**James D. Karis** was convicted of the 1987 murder of Peter M. Grant in Phoenix. He was convicted and sentenced to 67 years in prison.

**Gloria Marie Killian** was charged in the 1981 death of Edward Everett Davies. She was found guilty of first-degree murder.

In 2002 she was granted a new trial after a ruling that the prosecutor used perjured testimony and withheld evidence. The D.A. decided not to try her again and she was released after 16 years in prison.

In 2008, prosecutor Christopher "Kit" Cleland was charged with misconduct in the Killian case.

**Benjamin Barry Kramer** was born on December 3, 1954, the great-nephew of Meyer



Benjamin Barry Kramer

Lansky.

In 1974, the 19-year-old Kramer was arrested and charged with possession of marijuana and a concealed weapon.

A year later he was again charged with importing 2,352 pounds of marijuana.

In 1985, Tom Felts was killed in an execution style shooting. Kramer and partner Randy Lanier were suspected of paying \$50,000 for the hit but never charged.

In 1986, Kramer won the U.S. Open Class Offshore Powerboat Championship.

The 1986 death of coin dealer William Charles Halpern was one of the series of deaths linked to Kramer.

He was arrested in 1987 and accused of running a cross-country smuggling ring.

He was implicated in the 1987 death of Donald Aronow. It was suspected that Kramer hired hitman Robert "Bobby" Young to do the job.

In 1988 he received a life sentence without parole in Illinois for drug smuggling. Also convicted was his partner Randy Lanier, 1986 Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year.

In 1989 he was housed in the high security Metropolitan Correction Facility. On April 17, a helicopter flew over the barbed wire fences and hovered over the exercise yard. Kramer attempted to hop in. One of his feet hit one of the helicopter control pedals. The helicopter clipped the fence and crashed. Kramer suffered a broken leg.

In 1990, Kramer was convicted of 30 counts of racketeering, conspiracy and income tax fraud. For that he received a 45-year prison sentence.

In 1996, Kramer pleaded "no contest" to paying \$60,000 to Young to kill Aronow and received a 19-year sentence.

He was released from a Florida prison on May 11, 2003.

**John L. Kramer** was questioned in the case of Frederick C. Roth.

**Frank Albert Lapa** (1931-1995) was born in Chicago on October 24, 1931. He was a partner of Raymond Yablun in Coins of the World in Chicago.

On August 13, 1975, Yablun boarded a plane to attend the ANA convention at the Los Angeles Marriot Hotel. He was carrying \$150,000 in coin inventory and \$10,000 in cash.

A day later, Lapa reported him missing to Los Angeles police. Lapa hinted that Yablun may have gone on to Hawaii to start a new life.

On August 20, hotel staff opened a room with a DO NOT DISTURB sign on the door to find a dead body. It was initially thought that this may have been Yablun.

Police attempted to interview everyone who had been on the flight with Yablun. One of them, going by the name of Robert Van Cleef aroused suspicion. He was later identified as Lee Samuel Rusetos who had also been untraced since arriving in Los Angeles.

Rusetos came to light after being involved in a fight in Phoenix, Arizona. Los Angeles police picked him up and returned to California.

Rusetos soon began to spill the story. He said he and Frank Lapa along with Powell Clayton Crosby had taken Yablun to the house of Lapa's former wife. Lapa beat Yablun to death, removed his clothes and ordered Rusetos and Crosby to take the body far away.

Strong rain and animal activity exposed a nude body in the mountains near Yosemite National Park. It was identified as Yablun by a charm around his neck.



In 1976, Lapa was convicted of stealing coins from the Chicago Coin Co and sentenced to five years in prison.

In 1977, Lapa was convicted in the death of Yablun and sentenced to life in prison. He served fifteen years.

**Thomas Phillip Leae** was convicted of second-degree murder for causing the death of his girlfriend, Ailiana Siufanua, in a high-speed auto crash.

He stole a 1999 Honda in Auburn, Washington, on October 5, 2015. He and his girlfriend robbed coin dealer Bentley Brookes in Vancouver, Washington. Siufanua shot the owner while stealing cash, jewelry and silver antiques.

California Highway Patrol spotted the car speeding south on Interstate 5. Speeds reached 110 miles per hour before Leae spun out and entered the northbound lanes going south. He slammed into a tree at a rest stop.

Siufanua, who was not wearing a seat belt was killed. For this Leae received a sentence of 15 years to life in prison. He was sentenced to 10 years and eight months on other charges.

In 2023 he is at Centinela State Prison in California.

**James Franklin LeBus** Was born on February 24, 1939. He was married to Cynthia Ann Coleman and had three children.

He was a fence for stolen jewelry in the Wichita Falls area. He was responsible for the "Country Club Capers" with Clyde T. Burns and Alton W. Fancher. In 1976 he was sentenced to 4 years in prison for burglary. He was alleged to have set up the murder of James Keith.

**Myron "Pop" Levin** was suspected of involvement in the death of James J. White.



**Lonnie Dale Loyd** was implicated in the 1975 death of James Keith.

**Anthony Maresca** (12/7/1962 ) was arrested in 2015 for a series of five bank robberies. DNA evidence linked him to the 2014 death of Billy Schuler.

In 2017 he was sentenced to 40 years in prison for the bank robberies. In 2023 he is at Sumter Correctional Institution.

**Gary Joseph Masse** was a cousin of Stephen DiSantis, born on January 31, 1949.

Masse was charged in the 1981 death of Edward Everett Davies. In 1983 he was found guilty of first-degree murder, burglary, robbery and grand theft. That May he was sentenced to life in prison without possibility of parole.

**Joseph Maurice McDonald** was born on July 14, 1917, in Somerville, Massachusetts.

He was on the FBI "Most Wanted" list for six years. He had a long involvement with organized crime.



In 1961 he was sent to Walpole Prison on a sentence of 12 to 18 years for armed robbery. He escaped in 1963 and was a fugitive for three years. In 1966 he was involved with a shootout with two Boston Police officers and recaptured. He was released in 1969.

McDonald and James L. Sims stole about \$1 million in stamps from Jack E. Molesworth in March of 1971.

Raymond A. Lundgren assisted the FBI in recovering 340,000 rare stamps. He agreed to testify but was shot and killed in 1976.

McDonald was implicated in the 1976 murder of Raymond Alfred Lundgren.

He was recaptured in 1982 and tried for a race-fixing scheme. He was sentenced to six years in prison.

McDonald died on August 6, 1997, in Burlington, Massachusetts.

**Gerald Charles McGregor** was charged with interstate transportation of stolen property in the case of the 1975 murder of John H. Stillman. Gold coins taken from Stillman were found in his car. He received a 10-year prison sentence.

**Thomas Reed Merrill** was charged in the 1989 deaths of Clyde Oatts and Rene King at the Newport Coin Exchange. He was put on trial with Eric Wick who had confessed to acting alone.

They went on trial in June of 1991. On July 1, 1991, both were convicted of first-degree murder, attempted murder, conspiracy, robbery, burglary, and illegal use of a firearm. Merrill received a sentence of life in prison without parole. Wick received a sentence of 37 years to life in prison.

Merrill's conviction was vacated and he was granted a new trial in June of 1993. At the second trial in March of 1995, Wick testified that Merrill was the mastermind and the shooter. The jury was deadlocked and a mistrial was declared.

That fall Merrill was put on trial for the third time. On October 13, 1995, he was acquitted and released.

**Glenn Edward Meyer** pleaded guilty to a home burglary at age 19 in 1966. He also had drug charges.

He pleaded guilty to first-degree murder in the 1980 killing of James Milton Allen and escaped the death penalty. He received a sentence of 27 years to life in state prison.

**Arthur David Mirabal** was charged in the 1980 death of Walter F. Nickerson. He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

**William Charles Mooney** (1950-2021) was born on May 7, 1950. He was convicted of second-degree murder in the deaths of four people in Lee Center, New York, in 1979. He received four sentences of twenty-five

years to be served consecutively at Attica Correctional Facility.

He died in prison on May 9, 2021.

**Todd Wayne Mulder** was implicated in the 2003 death of Jordan Allgood.

In 2007 he was found guilty of murder, aggravated robbery and aggregated kidnapping.

**Sandra Renee Murphy** was born in Los Angeles, California in 1966. On a visit to Las Vegas, she lost her money gambling and took a job as a topless dancer at Cheetah's. There she met Ted Binion and soon moved in with him.



His drug use and abuse put a strain on their relationship and she began an affair with Rick Tabish.

On September 17, 1998, she reported finding Binion dead and the death was first believed to be an accidental overdose.

In June of 1999, she and Tabish were charged with murder, robbery, grand larceny and conspiracy. They were found guilty in May 2000. Murphy received a sentence of 22 years to life in prison while Tabish received 25 years to life.

The Nevada Supreme Court overturned the murder conviction in July 2003. Murphy was convicted of lesser charges but released on time served.

After her release from prison, she married art dealer Kevin Pieropan. They own an art gallery in Laguna Beach.

**Joseph Richard Nessley** was charged with receiving stolen property in the 1986 case of Darrell M. Robinson.

**Michael L. Norton** was an alias for Steven Higuert.

**Michael Miles Ogden** was charged with murder in the 2018 case of Fort Worth dealer Gary Duke. He was sentenced to 35 years in prison.

**Charles Jesse Palmer** (1938-2006) was born in Bartow, Florida on March 15, 1938.

He was convicted of the Nebraska death of Eugene W. Zimmerman in 1979. He was sentenced to death on August 7, 1980.

In 1984 he joined three other Nebraska death row inmates in a civil rights suit against prison authorities claiming that the prison did not provide adequate access to a law library. In 1986, a U. S. District Judge issued a consent decree granting prisoners more access to the law library,

Palmer was scheduled to die on July 6, 1987, but Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackman granted a stay of execution.

On February 19, 1988, he filed suit claiming that segregation of death row inmates represents cruel and unusual punishment. The suit was dismissed.

He was scheduled to die on September 16, 1994.

Palmer died in Lincoln, Nebraska, on August 16, 2006.

**Edward Howland Parry** (1944-1996) was born on June 24, 1944.

He was convicted in the 1979 death of Carl Bachman and three others and sentenced to four consecutive terms of 25 years in prison.

He died in prison on May 20, 1996.

**Wesley Peery** (1924-1988) was a serial killer who admitted to eleven murders. He was convicted of the robbery and murder of Marianne Mitzner on April 30, 1976. He was sentenced to die in the Nebraska electric chair on June 24, 1976.

He died of a heart attack. His death penalty sentence was reduced to life in prison.

**Melissa Pierce** was charged in the 2018 case of Fort Worth coin dealer Gary Duke.



**William Leon Pinson** (1919-1984) was born on July 15, 1919. In 1949 he was married to Peggy Trout. They had a son.

In 1954, he received a two-year sentence for burglary of the Mike Carter Engine Works.

In 1962, he made an attempt to escape from the Eddy County Jail. In 1962 he was convicted of forgery.

He was a habitual criminal. Accomplices testified that he shot James Keith in 1975. It took six minutes for a jury to convict him of the murder. He was sentenced to life in prison.

In 1980, he was released from the federal prison in Leavenworth, Kansas, to be transferred to state prison in Texas for the Keith murder.

He died in prison on May 15, 1984.

**Jensyn Polner**, age 20, was charged in the 2018 case of Fort Worth coin dealer Gary Duke. She received a 25- year prison sentence.



**Mark E. Porter** was born on November 13, 1960.

He pleaded guilty to two counts of second-degree murder in the deaths of Gary Junior Tyrell and Jan Tyrell. They were killed in Springfield, Missouri, in 2014.

Porter was sentenced to two consecutive terms of life in prison. In 2023 he was at the Jefferson City Correctional Facility.

**Joseph H. Riberdy** was questioned in the case of Frederick C. Roth.

**Frank Ringler** (50) was charged with unarmed robbery in the 1972 case of Willis Smith. He was returned to the Chillicothe Correctional Institute to serve out the remainder of a previous sentence.

**Jonathon Rubio-Segura** was born on June 12, 1984. He was convicted of throwing a drunken punch that resulted in the 2010 death of Anthony Gale.

**Thomas Eugene Rudelik** was born on October 24, 1924. He was a career criminal who operated as part of a Cleveland burglary ring. In 1963 he was serving a term for burglary in the Ohio State Penitentiary. In 1964 he was acquitted of burglary charges. He was a suspect in a 1965 theft from Frederick C. Roth.

**Vaughn Rue** was the grandson of William Rue and fourteen years old at the time of the murder. He testified that he burglarized the house twice prior to the murder. He sold stolen coins to John Conley and Paul Chambers who murdered William Rue in 1972.

**Leo “Lee” Samuel Rusetos** (1944-2003) was born in Los Angeles on March 7, 1944. In his youth he played guitar with the Elgin Watchband. He was a Vietnam war veteran and car salesman who rode from Chicago to Los Angeles on the same plane as Ray Yablun

He was charged as an accomplice in the murder of Ray Yablun. Murder charges were dismissed at a preliminary hearing in 1975.

In 1977 he pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to commit grand theft and accessory after the fact to murder. Rusetos then disappeared.

He was rearrested in 1983.

He married Jacqueline Waynert in Las Vegas on March 26, 1987.

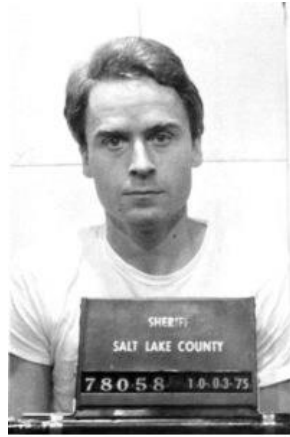
Rusetos died at Columbia St. Mary’s Hospital in Milwaukee on October 10, 2003.

**John Vivian Schoonmaker** (31) pleaded guilty to a charge of second-degree murder in the 1974 case of Earle Sherwood.

**Edward Lee Scott** was charged with receiving stolen property in the 1986 case of Darrell M. Robinson.

**Charles Thurman Sinclair** (1946-1990) became

known as the coin shop killer. He was born on November 24, 1946, in Jal, New Mexico. He opened a Hobbs, New Mexico, coin shop in the 1970's using his collection as inventory. Later he expanded to sell guns.



Charles Thurman Sinclair

It is believed that Sinclair killed David M. Sutton at his store in Everett, Washington, on January 27, 1980. Silver coins valued at \$80,000 were taken.

A 1985 fire destroyed the shop and he defaulted on his loans. Arson was suspected but never charged. Out of employment, he left town. Between 1985 and 1989, he lived on a rented farm near Demming, Washington, as Jimmy Charles Weir.

It is believed that Sinclair killed Thomas Rohr during a robbery at his shop in Mishawaka, Indiana, on August 28, 1985.

In 1986, Robert and Dagmar Linton set off in their red and white trailer to visit the Vancouver World's Fair. Their trailer was found empty in a Washington State campground. Their pickup was found at the Tacoma airport. Sinclair was found in possession of items stolen from the Lintons.

It is believed he killed Ruben Lucky Williams in his shop in Vacaville, California, on November 5, 1986.

It is believed he killed Leo Cashatt in his shop in Spokane, Washington. On July 14, 1987.

It is believed that he killed LeRoy Hoffman in his shop in Kansas City, Missouri, on March 12, 1988.

On May 4, 1990, he visited Legacy Rare Coins in Murray, Utah. He identified himself

as Jim Stockton and stalled until closing time.

He shot owner Kelly Finnegan in the head and Finnegan pretended to be dead. Sinclair then stole inventory worth \$60,000.

He visited Treasure States Gold and Silver, the Billings, Montana, coin shop of Charles William Sparboe. He said he was a farmer looking to invest in coins. He returned to the shop on July 31, 1990, and shot Sparboe and his employee, Catharine Newstrom.

Jim Sparboe, son of William, was able to give a description of the killer. After this description was circulated, a Spokane coin dealer reported that the description matched a customer, identified as Jimmy Charles Weir.

Weir was tracked to his house in Kenny Lake, Alaska, and arrested on August 13, 1990. He was soon identified as Charles Thurman Sinclair.

Charles Thurman Sinclair died of heart failure in jail in Anchorage, Alaska, on October 30, 1990. He had taken an overdose of heart medication and suicide was suspected but the death was declared accidental.

The story was told in the April 2021 issue of *The Numismatist* as "The Coin Shop Killer" by Pete Smith.

**Eugene Skaar** was an ex-con involved in the 1979 murder of John Turner and three others. He recruited Ronald Woomer as a driver and accomplice. He shot himself to death when surrounded by police in a Myrtle Beach motel.

**Jim Stockton** was an alias for Charles Thurman Sinclair.

**Ailiana Siufanua** killed Bentley Brookes in Vancouver, Washington, in 2015. She was killed in a high speed crash as her boyfriend, Thomas Phillip Leae was attempting to elude police.

**Chk Srown** was arrested and charged with second-degree murder in the 2011 death of Steven M. Halfon.



**David Edward Stone, Sr.** (1956-2011) was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on November 12, 1956. He married Elizabeth Eve Stewart in 1977. They had a daughter in 1978 and son David Edward Stone, Jr. in 1981. David and Elizabeth were divorced in 1994.

He served briefly in the U. S. Navy. His many jobs included bank teller, security guard, drive-in movie attendant, ice cream parlor worker and employee of Pacific Bell Telephone Company by the age of 23.

He was suspected of the 1979 murder of James D. Bibee but never charged.

In 1981 he robbed a jewelry store and received a six-year prison sentence.

He went on trial for the 1979 Fresno death of Frank Moyer in 1982. The prosecutor was Ronn Couillard. A jury found him guilty and he received a sentence of 27 years to life in prison on May 6, 1982.

On February 22, 1984, the court overturned the verdict and granted a new trial. He was convicted again and sentenced to life on January 13, 1986.

He remained in prison from 1981 to 2011.

He died of multiple myeloma and sepsis at Salinas, California, on June 25, 2011.

In January 2010, Elizabeth “Betsy” Stone met with Ronn Couillard. She expressed concern for her safety if Stone was released. He died before the parole hearing.

**Alan Swiger** pleaded guilty to the murder of Raymond Ferns on September 4, 1971. He was sentenced to life in prison.

He also received a sentence of 15 to 20 years for the armed robbery.

**Richard “Rick” Tabish** was born March 15, 1965, in Missoula, Montana. His father was one of



the wealthiest men in Missoula.

When he was twenty, he stole a 17<sup>th</sup> century painting worth more than \$600,000. He received a three-year suspended sentence.

In 1987 he assaulted another driver in a road-rage incident. He received a six-month jail sentence and served forty-one days.

In 1988 he pleaded guilty on drug smuggling charges. He served nine months of a ten-year sentence.

He was in the construction business in Las Vegas when he met Ted Binion in the men’s room at Pieros. He socialized with Binion and Sandra Murphy.

Tabish was charged with kidnapping Leo Casey and torturing him to turn over ownership of a sand pit. Also implicated was gangster Herbert Blitzstein.

Binion contracted with Tabish to build an underground vault on a vacant piece of land near downtown Pahrump, Nevada. On July 4, 1998, a group of workers transported Binion’s silver hoard to the vault and buried it ten feet below ground.

Two days after the death of Ted Binion, Tabish returned to the scene at 2:00 a.m. to attempt to dig up the vault. He had not gotten permission from anyone.

Tabish was arrested along with Sandra Murphy in June of 1999. They were charged with murder, robbery, grand larceny, burglary and conspiracy. He was convicted and received a sentence of 25 years to life in prison.

The Nevada Supreme Court overturned the conviction in July of 2003. The court said that evidence from the Casey case should not have been introduced in the Binion case.

Tabish was acquitted of the murder charges in the second trial. He was released on parole on May 18, 2010.

Tabish returned to Montana and went into business mining cryptocurrency.

**Eugene L. Terwillinger, Jr.**, was born on November 6, 1940.

He was wanted for questioning in the 1970 murder of Frederick C. Roth. That August 21 his body was found in a shallow grave, shot in the back of the head, and covered with lime.

In November of 1972, John L Kramer and Joseph H. Ribardy were taken into custody for questioning in the Roth case,

**Jamison Layne Townsend** (1981- ) was born in Bell, Texas on June 30, 1981. She was employed as a nurse.

She was charged in the 2016 deaths of Cleveland Mosley, Robert Ivy and Ted McLemore in Bills' Pawn in Jackson, Mississippi.

**Michael John Turnbough** (32 yo in 1986) was implicated in the 1985 death of Robert Rosberg. He pleaded guilty to shooting Rosberg and received a sentence of 45 years in prison.

**Bryan Scott Veal** pleaded guilty to first-degree murder in the 1984 death of Roger Kirby. He was sentenced to life in prison.

In 2019, Veal, age 54, married Paige Marie Jones, age 20, le.

**Ansel Vincent Vitale** (1949-1971) escaped from Mansfield Reformatory on June 24, 1971. He was suspected with involvement in the September 4, 1971, murder of Raymond Ferns. He was found hanging from an oak tree on November 6, 1971.

**Terry Dean Warren** was an accessory after the fact in the 1980 death of James Milton Allen. Convicted killer Donald Cronk was wounded during the robbery.

Cronk and Meyer went to the home of Terry Warren after the robbery, Warren provided medical treatment, a false birth certificate and a driver's license.

For his involvement, Warren was



sentenced on June 27, 1984, to a year in the county jail and fined \$3400.

**Brian Charles Webb** was born on September 23, 1986, in St. Louis, Missouri. He was shot to death during the commission of a robbery in Fort Worth on July 5, 2018. He killed Gary Duke, owner of Fort Worth Gold and Silver Exchange.

**Jimmie Charles Weir** was another alias used by Sinclair.

**Steven Wayne White** (b. 3/25/1980) was charged in the 1987 murder of Tampa Bay coin dealer James Albert Boyd.



Steven Wayne White

In 1982 he had been sentenced to twelve years in prison on four counts of theft and six counts of dealing in stolen property. He was paroled on January 17, 1985.

He skipped parole in Las Vegas and moved to California where he was wanted for questioning in the 1987 murder of a Santa Ana dentist Cedric Horn.

Workers at the Centerbanc branch were suspicious of the man identified as James Boyd attempted to withdraw \$30,000 from Boyd's accounts. White had pasted his picture over that of Boyd on his drivers license and passport.

Boyd was arrested in Atlanta on June 24, 1987. He attempted to bribe deputies who flew him back to Florida. When that was rejected, he asked the pilot to let him out during the flight so he could feed himself to the sharks.

White was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. In June of 2015, the Cedrick Horn case was reactivated. White pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in 2017.

He remains in prison in 2023.

**Fred Thomas Whitehead** (30 in 1979) was owner of the Myrtle Beach Coins and stamps. He was implicated as the mastermind in the 1979 murder of John Thomas. He was charged on February 23, 1979, with conspiracy to commit murder, armed robbery, and accessory to receiving stolen goods. He was convicted and sentenced to twenty-five years in prison.

**Eric John Wick**

was the son of an FBI agent, He was charged with the 1989 murders of Clyde Oatts and Rene King and the wounding of Bill King at the Newport Coin Exchange. It was alleged that he robbed the store of \$45,00 in gold coins. He was traced through a sales receipt to the Tustin Marine Base.



Eric John Wick

Wick was convicted at trial and given a sentence of 37 years to life.

**Charles James Wilson** was charged with interstate transportation of stolen property in the case of John H. Stillman, He received a 10-year prison sentence.

**Ronald Raymond Woomer** (1954-1990) had a tough childhood and a long criminal career. At age 19 he was sentenced to three years in state prison for stealing fourteen cases of beer. He did another year in prison on a charge of statutory rape of a fifteen-year-old girl.

He was convicted in the 1979 murder of John Turner including two counts of kidnapping, one count of kidnapping, criminal sexual assault and assault and battery with intent to kill. He testified in court that Fred Whitehead paid him and Eugene Skaar \$10,000 to rob the coin collection of John Turner.

On July 23, 1981, he was sentenced to die in the electric chair. In 1981 the South Carolina Supreme Court overturned his death sentence in the Turner case. He was never retried in that case as he had also received death sentences in other cases. He was executed for the murder of Della Louise Summers.

After exhausting his appeals, he died by electrocution in South Carolina on April 27, 1990.

**Mattie Elizabeth Young** was charged in the 1975 shooting death of John H. Stillman. She was convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

## Murder – Victims

1923

This appeared in the *Covington Virginian* on December 26, 1923:

“COIN COLLECTOR MURDERED HARLAN, Ky., Dec. 26. -Apparently the victim of a robbery and murder, the body of Sherman Clavender, an eccentric resident of Harlan County, was found on Pine Mountain. Clavender had a hobby of collecting silver half dollars, and always had his pockets full of coins. No money was found on his person.”

The name Sherman Clavender does not appear in biography databases.

1959

**Joseph Cucilic** ( 9/22/1959) was a retired real estate broker who lived in a Chicago mansion filled with antiques. His dead body was found naked and beaten with his hands bound with wire.

His caretaker was also tied and beaten. He was taken to a nearby hospital.

Two thieves were apparently after a rare coin collection owned by Al Sax who rented a room from Cucilic. Value was estimated at \$60,000.

The name Joseph Cucilic was not found in biography databases.

1961

**James Edward Crawford** ( 8/15/1961) was found dead at home in Perry Township near Canton, Ohio. Crawford was shot in the chest and back of his head. The home was ransacked and rare coins were missing.

1962

**Bruno Henry Crossfield** (7/22/1891-2/7/1962), was born in Washington County, Minnesota, as Bruno Henry Kreutzfeldt. He was found dead with a crushed skull in his bedroom behind his store, Bruno's Coin Shop, in San Francisco. He had been dead for three to five days. The store was described as cluttered and dingy. His wallet and money belt were missing.

1966

**Barbara Ann Comeau** (12/4/1948-11/28/1966) was just seventeen-years-old when she was beaten and her throat cut in the kitchen of her apartment in Worcester, Massachusetts.

A coin collection worth about \$100 was taken but soon recovered.

Her cousin, Joseph W. Chesnulavich was convicted of her murder and another murder. He was sentenced to life in prison.

1968

**James J. White** (10/17/1924-9/27/1968) was married to Winifred with a son and a daughter. He was a top criminal investigator with the Treasury Department.

He was found dead in Pennsauken, New Jersey, in his car in the parking lot behind the Prince Inn Diner holding a 32-caliber pistol in his lap. The death was ruled a suicide.

There was suspicion that silver dealer Myron "Pop" Levin was involved in the murder of White. He had been investigated in 1969 for melting 90% silver coins.

1970

**Frederick C. Roth** (10/6/1893-6/15/1970) of Cleveland was a member of the Western Reserve Numismatic Club.

Roth lived alone in North Royalton, Ohio, with 15 tons of rare coins valued at a million dollars. After two robberies and losses valued as \$12,000, he moved his coins to a bank vault in 1964.

In 1965, Thomas E. Rudelik was arrested and charged with an attempted theft of the Roth collection.

Roth was found beaten to death with his hands and feet tied. His caretaker discovered the body.

Three or four thieves stole an Ohio Bell Telephone Co. truck and climbed a pole to cut off an alarm system.

Eugene L. Terwillinger was wanted for questioning in the Roth case. His body was found in a shallow grave in August of 1970.

In 1972, John L. Kramer and Joseph H. Riberdy were questioned in the Roth case.

1971

**Raymond J. Ferns** died the day after being shot in the head during a robbery at Jewelry City Coin Shop in Attleboro, MA, on September 4, 1971.

Two robbers took the owner, employee and customer into the basement and handcuffed them. They were frightened off by a siren heading for a nearby hospital. They left behind their gun and bags of loot.

Authorities claimed the case involved a nation-wide ring of thieves targeting coin dealers.

Initially charged in the case were Ronald T. Cooper, Vince DeCarlo, Robert Goldstein, Erasmus Iannaccone, Julian F. Iorio, Harold Swagger and Julian Tyma.

Alan Swiger pleaded guilty and received a life sentence for the murder plus an additional 15 to 20 years for the armed robbery.

Vince DeCarlo was an alias for Ansel Vincent Vitale. He was found hanging from

an oak tree on November 6, 1971. He had been dead for a few days.

1972

**William Rue** was born in Darke County, Ohio, and lived there all his life.

He was found dead face down on a bed with his hands bound on March 13, 1972. Rue lived in an apartment in Bradford, Ohio, but kept the house to store his coin collection, antiques and hoards of other stuff.

Rue had been a forklift operator for Hobart Manufacturing Co. in Troy. He was divorced with six daughters and two sons.

John Conley was convicted of the murder in September 1972 and sentenced to life in prison. He was released in 1990 after serving 17 years and five months in prison.

Paul Chambers pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of manslaughter. His sentence was one to twenty years but he was released after four months.

His grandson, Vaughn Rue, robbed the house on previous occasions. His sale of looted coins to Conley and Chambers led up to the murder.

**Willis Smith** (2/14/1917-11/12/1972) was an auto parts dealer and coin collector in East Liverpool, Ohio. He was shot dead in his kitchen.

Burglary charges were filed against Frank Ringler and Charles Michael Breon.

Joseph D. Crane was charged with the murder. The first trial resulted in a mistrial. The second trial produced a confession and a life sentence.

Breon pleaded guilty and received a sentence of 25 years for armed robbery.

Ringler was returned to the Chillicothe Correctional Institute to serve out the remainder of his sentence on an unrelated charge,

1974

**Earle D. Sherwood** (6/4/1893-1/20/1974) was born in Ossining, New York, and was

married to Gertrude. He was employed in the heating and plumbing business. He was author of *What shall I Collect?*

Sherwood was founder of the Reading (PA) Coin Club in 1941. Later he served as president of the Albany Numismatic Society and the Mid-Hudson Numismatic Club.

He was found beaten and strangled on the floor of his garage in West Pasco, Florida. His safe was removed from the house and found in the woods.

Sherwood had joined the ANA in 1934 as member 4556 and in 1939 as member 7726. The ANA offered a \$5000 reward for information leading to the killer.

John Vivian Schoonmaker was charged in the crime. He pleaded guilty in exchange for a lesser sentence and testimony against accomplices. Later Alfie Anthony Ferro also pleaded guilty.

**Robert C. Spraul** (7/16/1910-3/13/1974)

This appeared in *The Times Recorder* on March 13, 1974:

“Coin Collector Murdered  
CINCINNATI (UPI) – Robert C. Spraul, 64, who was a collector of valuable coins, was found murdered Tuesday in his ransacked home in suburban Price Hill. Three suspects have been arrested.”

Coins with an estimated value of \$7,000 to \$12,500 were taken. The police had a suspect but were unable to make a case, partially because the victim failed to keep records.

1975

**Marianne Mitzner** was shot three times in the head at the Mitzner Rare Coin Co. on June 6, 1975. Her body was discovered by her 7-year-old son.

About 2000 coins and watches were taken valued at \$22,000. Her husband, Ken Mitzner, donated coins recovered from the robbery to establish the Mariane Mitzner Memorial Fund for disadvantaged youth.

Wesley Peery was a serial killer convicted of the crime.

**Emmet McGee Jeffreys** (1/9/1887-12/15/1975) was born in Crailhope, Kentucky. He married Josephine I. Nelson in 1914 and married again to Hazel Cox in 1933.

He was shot to death in his home in St. Petersburg, Florida. When Jeffreys drew and fired his gun, the suspect fled without taking anything.

Michael Gates was found about four blocks away with two gunshot wounds. It is believed the wound in his thigh came from Jeffreys. A wound to his head was self-inflicted. He died in a hospital the following day.

Kenneth Derek Allender was also charged with attempted robbery and first-degree murder. He had helped to plan the robbery but backed out before it occurred. He was acquitted by a jury.

Kenneth Keith and **James Carter Keith** (11/21/1913-7/15/1975) lived at the Keith Ranch near Jolly, Texas. Both brothers were bachelors and collectors. Kenneth collected coins and James collected guns.

Kenneth donated his collection of Mexican coins, valued at \$50,000, to the American Numismatic Association. They publicized the donation in *The Numismatist*.

The article was read by James F. LeBus who passed the information on to a group of five including Clyde Burns, Earl Howard Culwell, Alton Woodruff Fancher Jr., Lonnie Dale Loyd, and William Pinson. They plotted to rob the Keith Ranch.

On July 12, 1975, Lloyd and Pinson broke into the ranch house and confronted James Keith. Pinson shot and killed him with a 12-gauge shotgun. Kenneth was beaten and tied up in the bedroom.

Failing to find the coin collection which was already at the ANA, the thieves took James' gun collection. The other three members of the gang helped to break into a wall safe.

The ANA offered a \$5,000 reward for information. Earl Culwell ratted on his partners to claim the reward. Clyde Burns was arrested and that night the Keith Ranch

was fire bombed, destroying the historic ranch house.

William Leon Pinson was brought to trial, convicted on January 29, 1977, and sentenced to life in prison. Kenneth died of a heart attack a few months after the trial.

In his will, Kenneth gave his stock in the Ben E. Keith Company to the ANA. The Keith stock accounts for a major piece of the ANA investment portfolio.

**John H. Stillman** (1/6/1975) was found dead from gunshot wounds to the head in his San Diego apartment-office. Gold coins worth \$130,000 were missing.

Matie Elizabeth Young and Kimberly Carol Conner were charged in the crime. Both were convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

Young had worked for Stillman as a secretary. Conner was her second cousin.

The women met two men in Las Vegas and travelled with them to Mexico. The men were arrested when they returned to the United States and stolen gold coins were found in the car.

Gerald Charles McGregor and Charles James Wilson were convicted of interstate transportation of stolen property. Each received a prison term of up to 10 years.

**Raymond Yablun** (1917-8/13/1975)

flew to Los Angeles to make deals and attend the 1975 ANA convention. He was carrying coins worth \$150,000 and never arrived at the Marriott Hotel. His coat and wallet were found in a garbage can near the coin shop of Clem Wojdak on Wilshire Boulevard.



On May 10 of 1976, his nude body was found partially buried in the mountains near



Bishop, California. He had been severely beaten.

In 1977, two men pleaded guilty to the murder. Leo Samuel Rusetos was a Chicago car salesman. Powell Clayton Crosby was a longshoreman.

Yablum's partner, Frank Albert Lapa was also convicted and sentenced to life in prison. He served fifteen years.

1976

**Raymond Alfred Lundgren** (3/3/1919-1/13/1976) was born in Brooklyn, New York. He and his wife Jean had just gotten out of their car at their condominium. A man approached and shot him to death.

Lundgren had been scheduled to testify in a New Jersey case related to a \$750,000 robbery.

Joseph M. McDonald was implicated.

**Robert Elsworth Richards** (2/12/1914-4/19/1976) was born in Parkersburg, West Virginia on February 12, 1914.

He was killed in his home in Bedford, Virginia, on April 19, 1976. He was shot twice while his hands were tied behind his back. A coin collection, knife collection and some guns were missing.

1978

**Stanley Winslow Pierce** (8/2/1940-6/12/1978) was born in San Francisco. Out of high school, he drove a frozen food truck and dealt in coins as a bobby. He married Shirlee A. Gurley and divorced in 1972.

Robert Drummond was alone in his Oakland, California, coin shop when a man came in armed with a .22 Luger. Drummond had time to hit the silent alarm before he was handcuffed by the robber and pushed to the floor.

Unfortunately, Stanley W. Pierce came into the shop and interrupted the robbery. The gunman ordered Pierce to help him fill bags with coins. Pierce refused to help, turned to leave and was shot in the back.

A police officer on patrol responded to the alarm and the robber pulled Drummond into a back room to begin a four-hour standoff.

Drummond remained cool during the standoff. Eventually he suggested that the robber could escape through a roof top air duct. When the robber was well up into the shaft, Drummond bolted for the door and escaped. The robber was taken into custody.

The robber had several aliases including Michael L. Norton but was charged under the name of Steven Higuieret. He was sentenced to twenty years in prison.

1979

**Carl Walter Bachman** (4/22/1929-11/16/1979), his wife **Gloria Wanzenried Bachman** (4/22/1932-11/16/1979), Carl's mother **Rose Dunn**, and **Bruce Barber**, an employee, were murdered in Lee Center, New York.

They were all shot in the head at the Tri Willow Nursery and Garden Store which included a coin shop for Carl. He and his wife lived in an apartment over the store.

Coins taken in the robbery were valued at \$127,500.

Convicted of the crime were Edward Howland Parry, William Rogers Hanna, and William Charles Mooney. Each received four sentences of 25 years to life to be served consecutively.

**James D. Bibee** (8/2/1907-8/2/1979) joined the ANA in 1961 as member 43474.

Bibee had a small shop in the back of Duffy's Antique Shop in Fresno, California. He failed to return from work on August 2, 1979. Tom Duffy called David Stone who said that Bibee had been at his house from about 5:00 to 6:00 that evening.

His body was found on Tuesday, August 7, in the trunk of his car, a 1964 Chevrolet Impala, parked across the street from the Clovis Police Department. An autopsy determined that he had been shot ten times in the chest.

Stone's wife Betsy was questioned and corroborated his story.

David Stone was suspected of the murder but never charged.

The story was told in *Murder in Visalia* by Ronn M. Couillard.

**Frank Alexander Moyer, Jr.** (6/6/1930-10/6/1979) was born on June 6, 1930. He served with the Army during the Korean Conflict.

His body was found in his U.S. Stamp and Coin Shop in Visalia. He had been shot five times.

David Stone was convicted of the crime and received a sentence of 27 years to life in prison.

The story was told in *Murder in Visalia The Coin Dealer Killer* by Ronn M. Couillard, published in 2017.

**Eugene W. Zimmerman** (2/7/1920-3/6/1979) served in the Army during WWII. He was married to Monica Naughtin with a daughter.

Zimmerman operated a coin shop in the first floor of his home. He was found strangled with an electric cord in Grand Island, Nebraska. Cash, coins and jewelry were missing.

Austin, Texas, coin dealer Jesse Garza contacted police after he was offered coins that matched some stolen from Zimmerman. When the suspect called again, Garza arranged to meet at the airport where the suspect was arrested.

Charles Jesse Palmer was charged, convicted and sentenced to death. He went through subsequent trials and appeals and died in 2006.

**John Monroe Turner** (8/2/1911-2/22/1979) was a retired civil engineer. He was shot to death in his home in Cottageville, South Carolina. His coin collection was taken.

Ronald Raymond Woomer (24) was charged with murder and armed robbery. On July 23, 1981, he was sentenced to death in the electric chair.

Fred Thomas Whitehead (30) a Myrtle Beach coin dealer was charged as an accomplice.

Also believed to be involved was Eugene R. Skaar (41) who killed himself when surrounded by police.

Woomer was also charged in the deaths of Arnie Lee Richardson, Earl Dean Wright, and Della Louise Sellers.

1980

**Walter Frederick Nickerson** (3/10/1931-7/20/1980) was a retired Air Force Lieutenant colonel who received a Distinguished Flying Cross. He was married to Catherine Leila Herrick with two sons and two daughters in Sacramento.

He was killed by a shot in the chest. Three coin cases and \$2000 cash were missing. On July 20, 1980, he visited Auction City and Flea Market. He said he was heading for Roseville Auction but never arrived.

His body was found in a field in Sacramento County. John Stevens Barnes and Arthur David Mirabal were charged. Mirabal was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. Barnes was placed on probation for five years.

**David M. Sutton, Sr.** (10/5/1943-1/27/1980) was an Everett, Washington, antique dealer with the Bennington Auction Co. & Tropical Fish Store. A police officer checking an unlocked door discovered his body in the store. He had been shot once in the back of the head.

He was one of the victims of Charles Thurman Sinclair.

**James Milton Allen** was married with a son and three daughters. A Korean War veteran pilot, he worked as a fish and game warden. He was also a conservation instructor at California State University.

He was the proprietor of Allen Coin Shop in Carmichael, California. He was killed on December 19, 1980.

Allen interrupted two men burglarizing his apartment. Allen fired twice and wounded

Donald Cronk. Cronk fired once and ran. Allen died later in a hospital.

Cronk and Glenn Meyer took a briefcase with contents worth \$50,000 and a 3.88 carat diamond ring worth \$40,000.

Cronk and Meter were both convicted and received sentences of 27 years to life.

1981

**Thomas George Cohen** ( 5/24/1981) was the owner of Gold Sources, Inc. in Houston. He was shot and killed in his office after returning from a buying trip.

**Edward Everett Davies** (2/16/1910-12/9/1981) was born in Provo, Utah. And married to Grace. He was employed as a truck driver for ten years. He had lived in Rancho Cordova for the previous sixteen years.

He was shot to death in a home invasion in Sacramento. California. His wife was shot in the back of the head but able to crawl for help. Two men knocked on the door claiming to be from the phone company. They demanded gold.

Gary Joseph Masse and Gloria Marie Killian were charged with the murder. Stephen DiSantis was a fugitive but arrested a year later,

Masse was convicted and sentenced to death. Charges against Killian were dropped. DiSantis, identified as the shooter, was convicted and sentenced to death.

1982

**Dwyaine Edward Frost** (9/6/1947-11/15/1982) was born in Dallas on September 6, 1947. He was married to Vickie Lynn Voris in 1974 and had a son in 1976, a daughter in 1977 and another daughter in 1982.

He was killed in an armed robbery at Red Eagle Coin Company in Dallas on November 15, 1982.

Forest Leon Ethington was arrested on suspicion but not charged,

1983

**William B. Veith** (7/29/1931-4/14/1983) was born on July 29, 1931. He served with the Army during the Korean War and married Alice Anderson on January 21, 1956. They had a son and two daughters.

Veith operated Bill's Pet Supply for fifteen years. He owned Rare Coin Items for ten years prior to his death.

Veith was found dead in the basement of his store on April 14, 1983. The prime suspect was John Kelly Gentry Jr. who became a fugitive from justice.

1984

**William Arthur Feigener** (1962-1984) disappeared in 1984.



Billy Feigener

It was hoped that sending Billy to a horse ranch in California would keep him out of trouble. That did not turn out well. He met Forest Ethington who convinced him to come to Texas to do robberies of coin shops. The two had a couple of successes.

Having learned the trade from a master, Feigener took Ethington's daughter's car to do a smash-and-grab robbery. He was caught and set to go to trial.

A witness said that Ethington was angry, was concerned that Feigener would flip on him, and that he would kill Billy. Later he said that he had killed Billy.

Ethington recruited a new crew to conduct a robbery in Pantego, Texas.

Human remains were found buried near Weatherton in October of 1985. They were not identified until December of 2019 when DNA was linked to Feigener.

With the October 2019 death of Ethington, the case was closed by exception.

**Roger Walden Kirby** (11/18/1922-1/30/1984) was an ANA member. He was a World War II Army veteran married with children. He worked for White Stores for twenty years.

He was beaten to death with a sawn-off baseball bat at his home in West Knox County, Tennessee. His body was discovered when his wife returned from work.

Gold, jewelry and old coins were missing from a portable showcase in the den.

Charged with the crime were James Timothy Clotfelter 30, Bryan Scott Veal 19 and Bobby Ray Ford 19.

**Darrell M. Robinson** (11/4/1952-6/15/1984) was born in Boyd County, Kentucky, on November 4, 1952.

He was owner of Coinex of Ashland, Inc. in Kentucky, and was shot to death in the store before the thieves took \$100,000 in jewelry.

Charged with murder were Vernon Holbrook Sr., Clay Holbrook, Edward Graham and Benjamin Christian.

Charged with receiving stolen property were John Jarvis, Edward Lee Scott, and Joseph Richard Nessley.

Court testimony indicated that Clay Holbrook took Edward Graham and a motorcycle to the location in a van owner by Vernon Holbrook, not related to Clay Holbrook.

Graham robbed Robinson with a .32 caliber pistol and fled on the motorcycle. Stolen jewelry was taken to Southern Ohio Raceway and hidden under the hood of a Cadillac. Graham later admitted to killing Robinson but said the shooting was unintentional. One incentive for the robbery was for Vernon Holbrook to get back a diamond ring that had been pawned with Robinson.

1985

**Thomas L. Rohr** (10/12/1943-8/28/1985) was born in Piqua, Ohio, on October 12, 1943. He married Carol J. Reed in 1963. They had a daughter and two sons.

He was a clerk at Nunemaker's Coin Shop in Mishawaka, Indiana. Previously he was police chief in Nappanee, Wisconsin.

During a robbery, he was shot in the head and killed. Cash and gold worth \$55,000 was taken.

**Robert Wayne Rosberg, Sr.** (10/16/1928-3/27/1985) was a clerk at the Artex Stamps and Coins shop in Pantego, Texas. He was found shot in a back room with his hands tied. Inventory worth several thousand dollars was missing from the shop.

Forest Leon Ethington was charged as the mastermind. Michael Heston and Michael John Turnbough were also charged.

Court records indicate that Ethington planned the crime and recruited Heston and Turnbough who entered the shop on March 27, 1985, near closing time. Turnbough took Rosberg to the back of the shop and bound him to a table with flexcuffs. Heston emptied the safes and carried contents out to the car.

Turnbough shot Rosberg three times in the back of the head with a .22 caliber Beretta automatic fitted with a homemade silencer. Ethington kept watch from across the street while listening to a police scanner. After the crime, the three returned to Ethington's home.

Ethington and wife Kathy had a table at the Long Beach show in May. Their stock included items that could be identified as coming from the burglary by packaging and handwriting on envelopes. Ethington claimed he bought these at a previous show.

Ethington was questioned by Pantego police. He was subsequently arrested in California where more evidence was found.

Lieutenant **Doug Davis** of the Pantego Police Department was investigating officer. In 1987 he founded the Numismatic Crime Investigation Center.

1986

**William Charles "Billy" Halpern** (2/8/1958-10/21/1986) was a Hallandale firefighter and paramedic. An injury forced

him to go into the coin business. He worked out at the Apollo Gym and Fitness Center in Hollywood, Florida. He may have also been involved in the narcotics business.

He was killed inside his Miramar, Florida, townhouse. Police believe this was the first in a series of six murders, all drug related.

Tom Felts was killed, execution style, in October 1985. He worked out at the Apollo Gym and Fitness Center.

Charles Hall and Charlinda Draudt were slashed and killed in Hall's home on May 6, 1987. Hall did carpentry work for the Apollo Gym and Fitness Center and sometimes worked out there. Before he died, Hall told a friend she knew who killed Halpern.

Harry Van Collier and James Hinote Jr., were shot in the head in Hinote's home on May 14. Hinote worked out at the Apollo Gym and Fitness Center. The Sheriff identified Collier as the killer of Hall and Draudt.

Powerboat driver Benjamin Barry Kramer and race car driver Randy Lanier were suspected of paying \$50,000 to have Tom Felts killed. They were not charged in that case but were sentenced to life in prison on unrelated drug charges.

**Ruben Lee "Lucky" Williams** (3/22/1927-11/5/1986) was born in Dandridge, Tennessee, on March 22, 1927. He was a World War II veteran.

He was murdered in his shop, the Golden Hills Coin Exchange, in Vacerville, California, on November 5, 1986.

His wife reported him missing. His car was found in a parking lot a block away. There was blood in the car and a spent cartridge.

He was shot twice in the head. The unlucky victim was dumped in a creek two miles away. A customer who matched the description of Sinclair had been in the store wanting to buy gold.

The murder has been attributed to Charles Thurman Sinclair. When he was arrested in 1990, Williams' drivers' license, military identification card and keys were found in

the house. Also found were receipts, ledger books and records from the store.

1987

**James Albert Boyd** went missing on February 6, 1987. He was a dealer in rare coins, gold, ivory, antiques and guns.

In 1963 he had been found guilty of second-degree murder in the death of Francis J. Veard who was having an affair with Boyd's wife. He was sentenced to twenty years in prison.

Boyd was last seen on February 6 when he bought traveler's checks in preparation for a trip to South Africa.

Boyd lived in a ten-sided house with windows closed off and an elaborate security system. When police checked on February 13, 1987, they found the house unlocked.

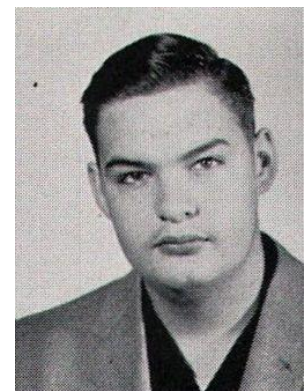
There was evidence of blood, bullet holes and spent cartridges. Valuable jewelry, firearms, bottles of wine and objects d'art were missing.

Bank employees notified police that Steven Wayne White had attempted to use Boyd's identification to withdraw money from his account. Boyd and his girlfriend, Janina Koziej Maytheux, were arrested on June 14.

White and Maytheux were found in possession of Boyd's El Camino, a .25 caliber handgun, \$10,000 cash and hundreds of thousands of Boyd's stolen property.

At trial, a defense attorney suggested that Boyd may have faked his death so he could have a sex-change operation to become Jane Golden.

White was convicted of the murder and sentenced to life in prison. Maytheux was charged with grand theft and deported back to France.



Leo Nordeen Cashatt, Jr.

Boyd's body has never been found.

**Leo Nordean Cashatt, Jr.** (4/14/1942-7/14/1987) was born in Spokane, Washington, and graduated from Gonzaga University. He was the owner of Cashatt Coins in Spokane. He was shot in the head and died in his coin store. He was found by his wife, Maureen, and daughter. It is believed he was killed by Charles Thurman Sinclair.

**Peter M. Grant** (1915-12/15/1987) was born in Indianapolis. He served in the Navy during World War II and was captain of a PT boat in the South Pacific. He settled in Phoenix in 1946 and started Pete's Fish and Chips Restaurants in 1947. The chain grew to 13 locations.

A cleaning woman found him dead in his apartment. He had been shot several times.

James D. Karis was a Phoenix private investigator. He was arrested after he attempted to sell stolen coins to a Phoenix coin dealer. A search of his storage unit yielded 2200 gold and silver coins stolen from Grant. In 1988 he was found guilty of the murder of Grant. He was sentenced to 67 years in prison.

1988

**Roy A. Edwards** (11/15/1988) was registrar for the Wilfred Beauty Academy in Newark, New Jersey. Dealing in coins and precious metals was a sideline.

He was killed in a home invasion. His wife and daughters were assaulted. He was shot in the neck as he attempted to escape through a screen door.

Joseph M. Harris was charged with the crime.

**LeRoy Melville Hoffman** (7/29/1935-3/12/1988) was born in Brooklyn. He retired from the Air Force and lived in Kansas City after 1970. He was married to Eustelle with a daughter.

He was killed in Lee's Coin Store in Kansas City. The store was also known as Central States Numismatic Investments. He was found lying in a back room and shot in the

head. He had talked recently about selling the store and getting out of the business.

His murder is attributed to Charles Thurman Sinclair.

1989

**Clyde Oatts** (6/18/1943-3/4/1989) was killed during a robbery at the Newport Coin Exchange. Also killed was Rene King (3/4/1989), wife of the owner, William D. King. William was also shot and suffered permanent brain damage.

Convicted of the crime were two former Marines, Thomas Reed Merrill and Eric John Wick. Merrill was retried twice and acquitted in 1995.

**Douglas J. Berry** was sleeping in the back of his coin store in Watertown, New York. On September 8, 1989, Gary Charles Evans and Damien Cuomo broke in. Evans shot Berry to death.

1990

**Charles William Sparboe** (5/19/1930-7/31/1990) was born in Jewell, Iowa. He operated Avis Car Rental in Billings and later Safe-Way and Maverick service stations. He was a partner in General Custer Hotel.

He opened Treasure State Silver & Gold Shop in 1980. It was there that he was shot and killed on July 31, 1990.

Also killed was his shop assistant, Catharine Newstrom (7/31/1990).

They were victims of Charles Thurman Sinclair.

1991

**Gregory Jouben** (5/4/1955-10/17/1991) was killed in his coin shop in Little Falls, New York, on October 17, 1991. He was shot by serial killer Gary Charles Evans,

1993

**Ronald Lee Miller** (8/16/1944-3/16/1993) was co-founder and president of the Fremont Coin Club. He was murdered in his store, the Fremont Coin Gallery in California.



Joseph P. Cruz was a suspect along with two juveniles, Joseph Flauta and Kevin Gentry.

A probation report for Flauta had these details of the crime:

“On March 13, 1993, between noon and 1:00 p.m., Flauta and Gentry entered the Fremont Coin Gallery, intending to rob the business. On the way to the robbery, Gentry, who was armed with a gun, told Flauta that he would shoot Miller if there was any hassle. During the robbery, Gentry shot Miller, who died of multiple gunshot wounds to the head.

Flauta later admitted that he took gloves to the scene of the robbery and put them on after the shooting. He and Gentry took gold, coins, trading cards, jewelry, cash and guns with an estimated total value of \$386,100. Some of this property was later recovered. Flauta stated that he personally received approximately \$200 in cash plus trading cards from the robbery. He stated that he spent all of it on clothes for himself, gifts for friends and relatives, and he gave some money to his mother to pay bills.”

1994

**Willis John Cole** (8/19/1994) was a police officer killed while responding to the burglary of the D & S Coin Shop in New Cumberland Burrough, Pennsylvania on August 19, 1994.



Willis John Cole

Two suspects were apprehended within 45 minutes.

Lynwood Scott Anderson was given a life sentence and Seifullah Abdul-Salaam was sentenced to death.

1995

**Robert C. Rose** (6/26/1943-7/19/1995) was shot in the head in RenRob Coins, Inc. in South River, New Jersey on July 19, 1995.

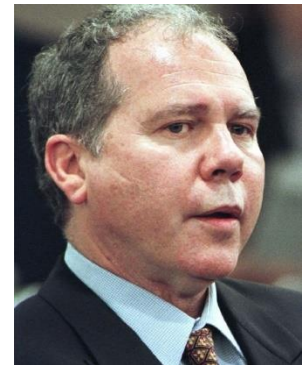
Michael Scott Behn was charged with the crime. A search of his apartment found coins

believed to come from Rose. He was convicted in 1997 and sentenced to life in prison. The conviction was overturned in 2005.

In the second trial in 2006, he was again convicted and sentenced to life in prison. In 2023, he is in New Jersey State Prison.

1998

Lonnie Theodore Binion. a/k/a **Ted Binion**, was born in Dallas, Texas, on November 28, 1943, the son of Benny Binion, owner of Binion's Horseshoe Casino in Las Vegas.



In 1964, Benny

Binion lost his gaming license and his sons, Jack, 23, and Ted, 21, took over operation of the casino.

In 1967, Ted was the target of an attempted kidnapping by cab driver Marvin Shumate. He was killed in what was described as a gangland killing which has not been solved.

Ted was married to Doris Binion from 1980 to 1995 and had two children.

Ted met Sandra Murphy who was a topless dancer at a casino. She soon moved in with him.

Ted Binion was charged with drug trafficking in 1996 and banned from the casino. He was also accused of ties to gangster Herbert Blitzstein. He died of a gunshot on January 6, 1997. In 1998, Ted's license was permanently revoked. He was forced to remove his bullion and coin collection from a casino vault.

Binion hired Rick Tabish to construct an underground vault at Pahrump, Nevada. The vault held 46,000 pounds of silver including 135,000 Morgan and Peace silver dollars. Binion and Tabish were the only people with the combination to the vault.

On September 17, 1998, Sandra Murphy called police to the home. Ted Binion was found dead on a yoga mat. An autopsy found heroin and Xanax in the body leading to an initial conclusion of an accidental drug overdose. It was not until May 5, 1999, that the death was ruled to be a homicide.

Two days after the death of Binion, Rick Tavish was found attempting to unearth the silver vault with an excavator and dump truck.

In June of 1999, Sandra Murphy and Rick Tabish were arrested and charged with murder, robbery, grand larceny, burglary and conspiracy.

Also charged with burglary were Michael Milot and David Mattsen.

The trial was a media sensation at the time. In May of 2000, Tabish was convicted and sentenced to 25 years to life in prison. Murphy received a sentence of 22 years to life.

The Nevada Supreme Court overturned the murder conviction in July 2003, contending that the judge gave improper instructions to the jury.

A second trial began on October 11, 2004. Both were acquitted of the murder but convicted of lesser charges. Murphy was sentenced to time served and released. Tabish was released on parole on May 8, 2010.

Silver dollars from the Binion vault were acquired by Spectrum Numismatics International for \$3.3 million, certified by NGC and marked as coming from the "Binion Collection."

The story has been told several times on TV crime reports plus books and movies.

2003

**Jordan Jay Allgood** (7/17/1960-11/25/2003) was the owner of Allgood



Jordon Jay Allgood

Coins in St. George, Utah. David Robert Campbell made this confession:

"On November 23, 2003, in St. George, Utah, I entered the Allgood Coin Shop with the intent to steal merchandise, I was armed with a loaded handgun, which I intended to use to intimidate the store owner, Jordan Allgood. During the course of the robbery, I shot Mr. Allgood. I handcuffed Mr. Allgood and stole merchandise, including coins and gold. Mr. Allgood died from injuries he sustained in the shooting."

Campbell pleaded guilty and received a sentence of five years to life.

Todd Wayne Mulder was found guilty of murder, aggravated robbery and aggregated kidnapping.

2006

**Leslie "Butch" Sorenson** (10/30/1941-6/30/2006) was married to Chris Maruszewski. He previously owned the Pioneer Pet Store in Parkland Mall. He started the Celebrity Coin and Stamp in Milwaukee in 1961.

A customer found him behind the counter in a pool of blood.

As of 2023, the case remains unsolved.

2010

**Anthony Louis Gale** (4/13/1972-3/26/2010) was born on April 13, 1972, the son of New York Mint owner, Bill Gale. He was Chief Financial Officer for New York Mint.

He was assaulted on the street in downtown Minneapolis at 3:00 in the morning on March 26, 2010. His head hit the concrete and he died twelve days later.

Although he was employed by a numismatic telemarketing firm, the crime was not numismatically related.

Anthony Rubio-Segura was convicted of the crime.

2011

**Steven M. Halfon** (5/15/1950-8/23/2011) was born on May 15, 1980. He was married

in 1974 to Terri Denise Ballenberg Halfon with a daughter.

He was the owner of Liberty Coin Co. in Gravesend, New York. He was taken from his shop by three men who beat him and dumped him in the trunk of a black Volvo. They dumped him off a mile away with severe head trauma. He was transported to a hospital where he died.

One of the attackers got out of the Volvo covered in blood. He threw his bloody T-shirt, Yankees cap and gray hoodie in the sewer before running off with the others. The Volvo was abandoned.

Andrew Jackson (26) was identified through fingerprints on the Volvo. Later Chk Srown was arrested in Florida.

**Stephen Tanenbaum**

(8/16/1948-2/11/2011) was born and lived in Brooklyn. He had an undergraduate degree from Columbia University and a masters degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



Stephen Tanenbaum

On the afternoon of February 11, 2011, he was walking from his home to his bank. As he crossed the street, he was struck and killed by spree killer Maksim Gelman.

2013

**Eldridge Rogerdel Gibson** (3/27/1932-10/31/2013) was born in Stanly County, North Carolina, on March 27, 1932. He was married to Alice Virginia Brown with three children.



Eldridge Rogerdel Gibson

He was killed at the B&G Coin Shop in

Albemarle, North Carolina, on October 31, 2013. His missing Ford F-150 truck was later found deep in a wooded park.

Ryan Anthony Efird was arrested and charged in the case. He was identified through surveillance video. He had a previous conviction for breaking and entering.

Efird pleaded guilty to first-degree murder charges to avoid the death penalty. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

In 2023 he is residing in Central Prison, North Carolina.

2014

**Billy Schuler** ( 5/20/2014) was a retired minister and coin dealer. He drove from his home to the Family Dollar in Holiday, Florida. There he met Anthony Maresca. A GPS tracking device showed the truck was driven to a wooded area in Tarpon Springs where Schuler's body was found. The truck was then driven to Maresca's home.

Anthony Maresca was convicted of five unrelated bank robberies and sentenced to 40 years in prison.

2014

**Gary Junior Tyrell** (2/7/1954-5/1/2014) was born in Springfield, Missouri, on February 7, 1954. He received a B.S. from Missouri State University in 1975. He went on to receive a masters degree from Missouri State University and Doctorate of Education from the University of Arkansas.

He began teaching at Mountain Grove High School following his 1975 graduation from college. He held positions as Transportation Director, Assistant Middle School Principal, Middle School Principal, and Assistant Superintendent.

He and Jan Ellen Nickell Tyrell (1/24/1953-5/1/2014) were murdered in their home in Springfield. They had been bludgeoned with a walrus tusk and shot.

Mark E. Porter was a friend of the Tyrell's and the superintendent of the Mountain



Grove School District and owed the couple a lot of money.

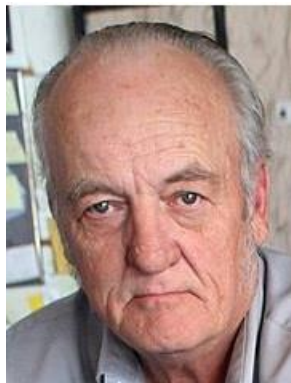
In 2015 he pleaded guilty to two counts of second-degree murder and was sentenced to two consecutive terms of life in prison.

The story was told as “The Collector” on an episode of *Dateline* that aired on Tuesday, August 30, 2022.

2015

**Dwight M. Brockman** (4/30/1948-7/20/2015) was born in Cheyenne, Wyoming. He was married to Ellen Collins with a son.

He and his friend, **George Carsten Manley** (8/25/1938-7/20/2015) were killed in Cheyenne, Wyoming.



Dwight M. Brockman

The Cheyenne coin shop was known as The Coin Shop. The murders happened during Cheyenne Frontier Days when a large number of visitors come to town.

As of eight years later, on July 20, 2023, the case remains unsolved.

**John Monroe Turner** (6/6/1937-11/7/2015) was born in Breathitt County Kentucky. He was married to Reva Watts with two daughters. He had gone into the coin business after retiring from Cummins Engine in Columbus, Indiana.

Turner was the owner of John's Coin and Jewelry Shop in Austin, Indiana. On November 7, 2015, A family member called 911 and first responders came to treat what, at the time, was thought to be a medical emergency. In the hospital it was discovered that Turner had died from a gunshot wound.

Court record report that James Caudill and his girlfriend, Ginger Lee, went into the store to retrieve a stolen gold ring that had been pawned. They left when Turner would not sell the ring back at the original price.

Caudill went home to change clothes and they returned to watch the store. Caudill put on a plastic pop bottle as a homemade silencer on a gun he got from his brother, Christopher.

After other customers left, Caudill returned to the store, shot Turner, and stole coins, jewelry and cash.

James Matthew Caudill pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 85 years in prison for the murder.

Also charged were his girlfriend Ginger Lee Cox, his brother Christopher M. Caudill, and his mother Patricia A. Caudill.

**Bentley Christopher Brookes** (9/18/1957-11/25/2015) was born in Anchorage, Alaska. He died of a gunshot wound at Pacific Bullion Precious Metals in Vancouver, Washington, on November 25, 2015.



Bentley Brookes

Ailiana Siufanua was identified as the killer. She died in a high-speed car crash in a car driven by her boyfriend Thomas John Leae.

2016

Owner **Cleveland Bryant “Bill” Mosley** (10/25/1935-12/17/2016), employee **Robert Ivy** ( 12/17/2016), and **Ted McLemore** ( 12/17/2016) were found dead in Bill's Pawn Jewelry Coin / Stamp Exchange in Jackson, Mississippi.

Jamison Townsend and Joshua Garcia were charged with the crime. Garcia received three life terms in prison.

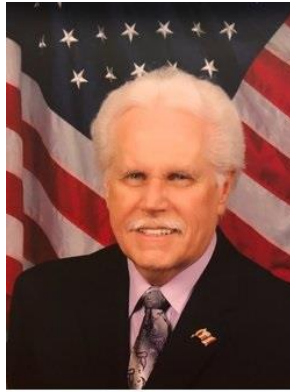
**Petro Rymar** ( 4/1/2015) came to the country from Ukraine. He was the owner of Bart's Coins and Collectibles in the Irving Park neighborhood of Chicago. On April Fool's Day, he let a young man through the security door into his shop. The man stabbed Rymar several times in the chest, took items from the vault, used a stool to break a window and jumped out of the store. This was witnessed by people in the area who

called police. They discover Rymar dead in the back of the shop.

Jonathon Herrera was charged with the crime.

2018

**Ronald Lee Ralston** (5/22/1942-1/26/2018) was born in Vincennes, Indiana, on May 2, 1942. His wife, Donna Earle Ralston, died in 2001.



Ronald Lee Ralston

Ralston served as a tank commander in the Army and retired from Allison Transmission in 2006.

On January 26, a housekeeper arrived at his Indianapolis house to find Ralston dead. The cause of death was blunt traumatic injuries. His missing white 2015 Mustang was found the following day.

He was known to have a coin collection and a stamp collection.

**Gary Duke**, age 58. was shot and killed in his store, Fort Worth Gold and Jewelry Exchange on July 5, 2018. He was pronounced dead at John Peter Smith Hospital.

Robber Brian Charles Webb was found dead at the scene. Charged in the case were Crystal Anne Hendrix, Michael Miles Ogden, Melissa Pierce, and Jensyn Polner.

2020

**Paul Edmunds** (10/2/1941-9/26/2020) attended Indiana Central College and was employed by Lilly for more than thirty years. He owned and drove more than 80 different Corvettes. He was a drag racer and National Hot Rod Association member.

He owned Diamond Stamp and Coin for thirty-five years. He had a booth at Shadeland Peddlers & Flee Market.

He arranged to meet a potential customer in the Hardee's parking lot. Surveillance video showed him park next to a red Saturn SUV.

A young woman got out and got into Edmund's car. A moment later the car lurched forward and the woman got out and fled.

Edmunds drove to the front of Hardee's and reported that he had been shot while meeting a young woman client. He died in a hospital the following morning. A cell phone left behind was used to identify Blankenship who was arrested.

Kayla Blankenship was charged with the crime. After a plea deal, she was sentenced to 45 years in prison.

## Pedophiles

Walter Breen's origin story is clouded in mystery. Much of that cloud came from Walter himself. The version presented here is as likely as any to be true.

**Walter Henry Breen** was born in San Antonio, Texas, on September 5, 1928. His father was Walter Henry Breen. His mother was Mary Helena Brown Mehl. That much is known from his birth certificate which was filed on November 19, 1942, when

Walter was fourteen years old. His year of birth aligns with his listing in the 1930 census.

The story of his parents is also cloudy. They were neighbors in Parkersburg, West Virginia, and married to other people. It was probably early in 1928 when Walter changed his name and the new couple moved to Texas. It is likely they never married and were separated in 1937. Walter was known

as Walter Brown when his mother took him back to West Virginia.

Walter submitted a bit of an autobiography to *Penny-Wise*, for the issue of January 1, 1978.

“September 5, 1930, born, San Antonio, Texas (?). Abandoned, Foundling, Brought up by adoptive father, a traveling salesman, whose name I bear: and by adoptive mother, of whom the less said the better – suffice it to say that she was about as fit to raise a kid like me as a chimpanzee would have been.”

[Author’s comment: I believed this at the time and the story got into *American Numismatic Biographies*. I provided the story to Moira Greyland who took it as the

*Press of Atlantic City* 6/23/1954 p. 19

## Coin Expert Penalized In Morals Case

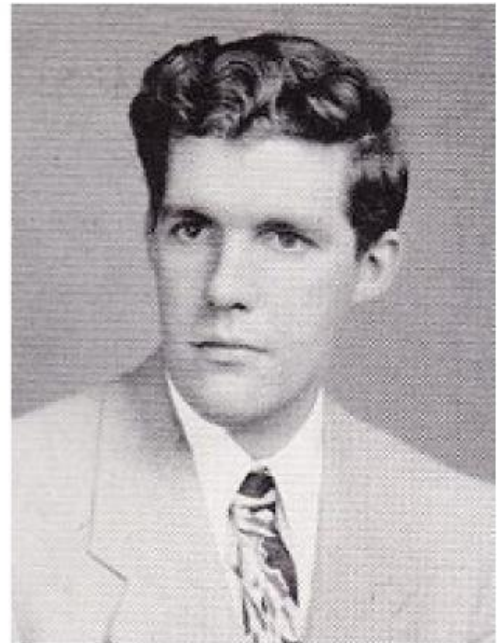
A young man described as an outstanding scholar and authority on coin collections was fined \$200 by Municipal Judge Stephen A. Damico yesterday on charges of molesting children on the beach near Connecticut Ave.

Walter Breen, 25, of 243 E. 59th St., New York City, was described by his attorney, as an honor graduate of Johns Hopkins College a Phi Beta Kappa, and recognized as a numismatist.

He was arrested by Lifeguards Joseph McNamara and William McCullough on June 6.

Judge Damico dismissed a charge of indecency against Breen pending approval of the prosecutor’s office.

Walter Breen in Johns Hopkins University yearbook, 1953



truth in her book, *The Last Closet*.]

Mary Brown put Walter in an orphanage in West Virginia and got a job there as a janitor. This would have been around 1940. Walter later said that the only love he ever experienced was with a priest at the orphanage. While in the Air Force in 1946, he was severely beaten when it was learned that he was homosexual.

He was in and out of VA hospitals between 1946 and 1950.

Walter attended Johns Hopkins University and completed his degree during the 1952-53 school year. He took exams to pass courses rather than attending classes.

In 1954 he was convicted of child molestation in Atlantic City and put on probation.

### Breendoggle

Walter and Marion Zimmer Bradley were active in the Sci-fi community around Berkeley. Walter molested children he met as sci-fi conventions. In 1961 there was a proposal to ban Walter from attending the 19<sup>th</sup> World Science Fiction Convention. There was a feeling within the community



that they were all strange in different ways and should be tolerant of the strangeness in others.

A second attempt to ban him in 1963 failed but he was banned from the 1964 Worldcon. Some hoped that marriage would change his behavior.

Walter married Marion Zimmer Bradley on the day of romance, Valentine's Day, February 14, 1964. The marriage was apparently successful, to the extent that their son Patrick was born 8½ months later on the day of spooks, Halloween, October 31, 1964.

Marion was aware of Walter's history and was generally tolerant. She was also his defender and enabler.

Walter and Marion were 1960's hippies. Walter wore a tie-died shirt, flower print shorts and sandals. This look persisted for decades.

Walter wrote *Greek Love* under the name J. Z. Eglinton, and published by Oliver Layton Press in 1964.

An Amazon quote from the publisher:

"The author of *Greek Love* believes that boy-love is a potential social force for good. In Ancient Greece, it was closely bound up with the highest ethical and philosophical ideals. Therefore we must seriously consider the possibility that boy-love can be a force for good right now, in our own country,"

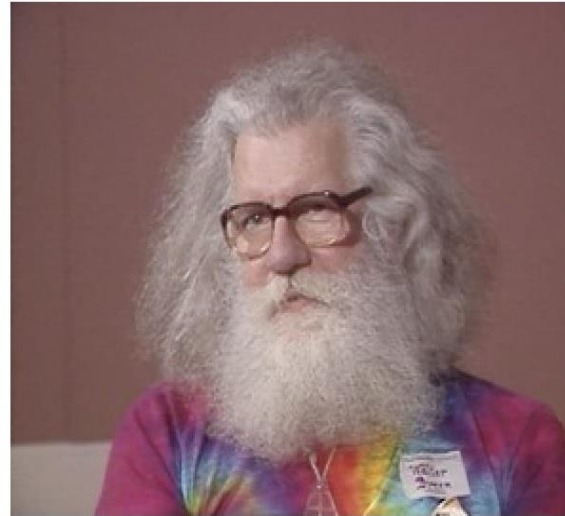
## SCA

On May Day, May 1, 1966, residents of Greyhaven including Walter and Marion hosted a party in Berkeley. It featured medieval costumes and themes. This developed into the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA).

SCA was another community of misfits who were tolerant of other misfits. At the SCA fairs, children might be free to move about without supervision. It was another great environment for Walter to thrive.

On July 5, 1989, his daughter walked in on Walter who was with a boy who had been

Walter Breen, 1988



visiting. She left the house and called police. When she later met with the police, she gave a detective the names of 22 possible victims.

Walter was arrested on April 23, 1990, based on the results of their investigation. He pleaded guilty to one felony count and was treated as a first-time offender. On November 30, 1990, he was sentenced to three years probation.

Another victim came forward and his father reported this to police.

Walter Breen was arrested at Superior Stamp and Coin Galleries on September 26, 1991. He was charged with eight counts of lewd and lascivious acts with a minor under the age of 14.

On November 27, 1991, he pleaded innocent on all charges. Walter was suffering from cancer and treated in a prison hospital. On July 14, 1992, he was sentenced to three years for violating probation. On December 15, 1992, he was sentenced to an additional ten years in prison for the eight counts in the second case.

Walter was confined to a wheelchair in prison and was the victim of frequent assaults from other prisoners.

Walter Henry Breen died in the prison hospital at Chino Penitentiary on April 27, 1993. His body was cremated and his ashes spread in Mendocino County.

[Author's comment: I met Walter at the 1981 ANA Convention in San Diego. I met with him and we corresponded about the die states of Classic Head cents of 1808-1812.

At another ANA convention, I saw him sitting at a table playing with a spinning disk that reflected light in shimmering colors. I realized later this was something he did to attract curious children.

Over the years I have met three father-son combinations who met Walter when the son was at a vulnerable age. All told a similar story. They got a creepy vibe from Walter and the father made sure to keep the son at a safe distance.]

**Robert Socrates Bashlow** was never convicted of being a pedophile. His history with Walter Breen suggests they shared some common interests.

Bashlow was enrolled at Columbia University in what was called the Columbia superkids project. In 1953, Dr. William Herbert Sheldon was working with the Columbia Medical School Constitutional Laboratory, Shelton, then 54 was a mentor to Walter Breen, then 25, who was working in the program as the coordinator of parapsychological research. Bashlow, then about 14, was enrolled in the project.

Although Bashlow must have had a genius I.Q. there is no record that he pursued higher education. His only reported profession was in the coin business as a publisher and promoter.

Bashlow published Walter Breen's *Dies and Coinage* through his QWERTYUIOPress in 1962. Then in his *Coin World* ads, he offered a copy free with a purchase.

Bashlow joined the ANA and converted to life membership in January 1962. Then in July 1962, he was expelled without any stated reason.

This quote is from Donald Mader in *Beyond Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context* (2002):

"It is one of his specialized books, *Dies and Coinage*, published by Robert Bashlow in 1962, which provides a link to our topic

here. Breen and Bashlow shared more interest than numismatics: both had an erotic interest in younger males. A wealthy coin and bullion dealer who had already created one press for numismatic publications, Bashlow was persuaded to fund another press for issuing material on 'sexual questions,' Called the Oliver Layton Press, its first book was *Greek Love* (1964) by Breen, who for it adopted the pseudonym created for him by Bashlow, by which he was to be known in homosexual circles, J. Z. Eglinton."

Marion Zimmer Bradley (MZB) gave a deposition in a civil case on December 14, 1998 questioned by Christopher Dolan. These are excerpts:

MR, DOLAN: To your knowledge, did Walter ever have sexual contact with your son David?

MZB: I asked David one time about it, and he told me one of Walter's friends had propositioned him and that he said no. and so the friend said, "Okay, Let's go ride the merry-go-round."

MR. DOLAN: Do you know the name of the person who propositioned him?

MZB: Yes, I do. His name was Robert Bashlow.

MR. DOLAN: What occasioned you to ask your son David about whether or not he had been propositioned by anyone?

MZB: Because I know Robert Bashlow, and I knew that anything with two legs which got in his vicinity was likely to be propositioned.

MR. DOLAN: I didn't hear that last part.

MZB: I said that anyone in his vicinity of either gender was likely to be propositioned. I never paid much attention because my attitude was well no harm in asking as long as he takes no for an answer.

MR. NOLAN: So, your understanding at that time in 1964 is that there was nothing inappropriate about an older man asking a minor for sex as long as the young boy said no?

MZB: As long as the young boy has plenty of opportunity to say no.

MR DOLAN: Okay. When your son indicated that he had been propositioned by Robert Bashlow, did you do anything to prohibit Mr., Bashlow from coming in contact with your son?

MZB: No. I think I might have thought it was funny.

MR. DOLAN: So, you thought the fact that an older man propositioned your then 13-year-old son was funny?

MZB: I thought Robert Bashlow was a pretty funny individual.

MR DOLAN: And you took no steps to prevent your son from coming in contact with a man who you knew had propositioned him?

MZB: Considering that David was about six feet and Bashlow, as I remember, was about five foot, one, I didn't worry about it.

MR. DOLAN: My question is a little bit more specific, though. Do you recall Walter saying anything to you on the subject of Bashlow propositioning your 13-year-old son?

MZB: As I said, I think he said

something like, Do you know what that idiot Bashlow has done now? and then he recounted a story.

MR. NOLAN: To your knowledge, did he express anything else that you understood to be disapproval to what Mr. Bashlow had done?

MZB: I think at the time he shared my belief that David was perfectly old enough to make his own decisions of that sort.

MR DOLAN: Okay. So, at that time it was your belief that a 13-year-old child was perfectly able to make their own decisions regarding sexual contact with adults?

MZB: Oh, really, a 13-year-old child? I wasn't a child at 13, were you?

Those brief excerpt should suggest the flavor of her testimony and the attitudes of Walter, Marion and Robert Bashlow.

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NUMISMATIC NEWS

July 28, 1979

## Fire Claims Life of NY Dealer

A hotel fire in Zaragoza, Spain, has claimed the life of New York City coin dealer Robert Bashlow, 40, owner of Williams Trading Co.

A coin collector since age 10, Mr. Bashlow was best known in U.S. numismatics circles as the originator of the Second Confederate cent restrikes of 1961. In recent years, he had dealt primarily in foreign coinage and was a frequent advertiser in *World Coin News*.

According to a longtime friend, Mr. Bashlow was among the 75 persons who died in a fire that leveled the Corona del Aragon Hotel in Zaragoza. He reportedly had arrived in Zaragoza by plane from Austria that evening, checking into the luxury hotel to rest for some buying and



Robert Bashlow

selling of coins the next day. The friend said Mr. Bashlow had been importing significant quantities of coins from Spain in recent months.

A coin dealer since 1957, Mr. Bashlow operated White Oak Trading Co., another New York wholesale numismatic dealership, before forming Williams Trading Co. a few years ago.

In 1961, Mr. Bashlow obtained the fragmented dies for the 1861 Confederate cent and had restrikes made in several metals. The dies, before they shattered, had been used in 1876 by Capt. John W. Haseltine to produce restrikes.

Mr. Bashlow, a bachelor, is survived by his father, Archie, and a sister, Alice.

## Ponzi Schemes

**Bernard Ross Hansen a/k/a Ross B. Hansen** was the owner of Northwest Territorial Mint (NWTM), founded in 2002. **Diane Renee Erdmann** was described as his girlfriend and vault manager.



In 1991, Hansen pleaded guilty to two counts of money laundering and failure to report cash transactions to the IRS. He was sentenced to 2½ years in prison.

In July 2009, Northwest Territorial Mint acquired the prestigious Medallic Art Company. However, Northwest Territorial Mint declared bankruptcy in April 2016. Much of Medallic Art was then acquired by Medalcraft Mint, Inc. Some 20,000 dies and archival material were acquired for the American Numismatic Society.

Hansen leased property from Bradley Cohen and Cohen Asset Management. In 2010 Cohen won a lawsuit against Hansen who was ordered to pay \$3 million for lease violations including environmental contamination.

Hansen retaliated by publishing Cohen's name on several websites and accused him of operating a Ponzi scheme. Cohen filed suit for defamation on August 8, 2012. Cohen prevailed and won the case.

In February 2016, Hansen was ordered to pay \$38 million in damages. This included \$18 million assessed to Hansen for damages and punitive damages. The Northwest Territorial Mint was assessed \$9 million for fraud, oppression and malice. Hansen was charged another \$7.5 million and the Mint \$3.5 million for false light invasion of privacy. Hansen and NWTM then filed for bankruptcy.

On April 16, 2018, Hansen pleaded not guilty to 20 counts of wire fraud and mail fraud. It was alleged that Hansen and Erdmann bilked \$25 million from more than 3000 customers. The indictment stated that Hansen and Erdmann had between 2009 and 2016 taken customer payments for their own use. They used money coming in from new customer to pay old customers, thus perpetrating a Ponzi scheme.

They also stored bullion for customers and came up \$4.9 million short. About 50 customers lost money and two more were defrauded in a bullion leasing program. There was an incidental million stolen from a Canadian bullion producer.

The couple left home on April 29, 2022, to avoid sentencing. They were placed on an FBI wanted list. On May 10, they were found at the Hadlock Hotel at Port Hadlock and taken into custody.

On June 6, 2022, Hansen was sentenced to 11 years in prison for 14 counts of wire and mail fraud. In 2023 he is at Sheridan FCI,

Diane Renee Erdmann was convicted of 13 counts of wire and mail fraud and sentenced to five years in prison. In 2023 she is at Pekin FCI.

## Receiving Stolen Property

**Michael R. Kirzner** was a Boston coin dealer with Michael R. Kirzner Rare Coins and Cosmic coins.

In 1972 he was charged with receiving stolen property taken in a burglary at the home of Don Romano.



In 1974 he was charged with receiving stamps stolen from the Cardinal Spellman Museum in 1973.

On December 10, 1976, he was driving when he was shot between the shoulders from another passing car. He survived the attack.

#### **Charles L. Litman**

*The Oil City Derrick*, July 18, 1977, page 20.

“A coin dealer was convicted of federal charges stemming from his alleged role as a fence for stolen silver.

A federal court jury convicted Charles L. Litman, 38, of Wilkinsburg, of two counts of receiving stolen good and one count of criminal conspiracy.”

**Michael Lombardi** was sentenced to two years in prison in 1981 for receiving stolen gold and silver jewelry taken by a gang of juvenile thieves.

#### **Keith Richardson**

*The Bangor Daily News*, November 24, 1992, page 5.

“Keith Richardson, the former Waterville coin dealer convicted of fencing more than \$288,000 in stolen jewelry from the Arizona man known as “Super Thief,” was denied bail Monday pending the appeal of his conviction returned earlier this year.”

**James B. Tilley** had an extensive criminal record starting at age 19. He was charged with receiving stolen property in the same two cases as Michael Kirzner, burglaries at the home of Don Romano and at the Cardinal Spellman Museum.

### **Robbery**

\***Dale J. Bissett** (1940-2018) was the owner of **Dale's Coin and Jewelry** in **Dunedin**, Florida and was active with the Clearwater Coin Club.

**Dale and Elaine Bissett** were robbed in their home on January 10, 1982. Arrested in the case were Jimmy Wayne Arnold and George Bruse Lawall.

On January 16, Virginia Guilbeau was robbed of diamonds worth \$100,000. Six people were charged in the case including Dale Bissett. He was charged with armed robbery and breaking down the jewels after the theft but the charges were dropped. He filed for bankruptcy in 1983.

Dale and Elaine were robbed again at Dale's Coin and Jewelry in **Dunedin**, Florida on January 31, 1989. Two robbers took away \$45,000 in coins and Jewelry.

**Larry Paul Graham** was charged with burglary in 1967 at age 17. He was arrested for possession of stolen property from the Dunedin robbery in February 1989 and released on bond before robbery charges were filed.

**Donald Eugene Josey** pleaded guilty to armed robbery in 1973 and was sentenced to prison for thirty years. He was arrested on February 15 for the Dunedin robbery.

\***William Slessinger a/k/a Edward Chapman** suffered a gunshot wound to the chest during a 1960 robbery at his home in Perinton, New York. Taken was a bag containing \$13 in pennies (cents).

Four teenagers were charged and three pleaded guilty.

**Wayne Thomas DeRue** (17) was sent to the State Reception Center at Elmira.

**Steven Robert Dovan** (21) was sent to Elmire Reformatory.

**Russell Daen Irwin** (18) was sent to the State Reception Center in Elmira.

The fourth suspect, **Stephen Douglas Breemes** (20) pleaded innocent. He was alleged to be the shooter. He had previously been charged with stabbing another youth during a fight. He received a sentence of 10 to 11 years at Attica.

**\*Ted Steven Chimel** was charged in 1965 with the burglary of a home and a coin shop after stolen coins were found during a search of his home. He tunneled through two walls to burglarize the **Money Vault** in Orange, California. He was convicted and sentenced to five years in prison.

In 1969, the United States Supreme Court overturned the conviction declaring that the search without a search warrant was illegal.

[The case was *Chimel v. California*. 395 U. S. 752 (1969), now known as the *Chimel Rule*.]

Later in 1969 he was again charged when stolen coins were found from a September 15 burglary. In 1971 he pleaded guilty to a charge of receiving stolen property.

**\*Charles Hindmarsh** was convicted of a Detroit bank robbery in 1967 and sentenced to twenty years in prison. He served three years.

In 1980 he participated in the robbery of the **Mount Pleasant Coin Exchange**. **Paul and Patricia Vanella** were threatened at gunpoint while \$250,000 in coins and cash were taken. He was convicted of robbery and conspiracy on May 19, 1986. He was sentenced to two-to-four years in prison. At the time of the robbery, he was in the witness protection program.

**Philip Seslar** pleaded guilty to the Mount Pleasant robbery, cooperated with the prosecution, and was placed on probation. Charges against two other suspects were dropped for lack of evidence.

**\*William E. Johnson** and his wife were held at gunpoint for 45 minutes during a robbery of their home in Santa Barbara, California, on February 2, 1968. The loss included \$75,000 in coins. W. E. Johnson was a coin dealer and member #110 of the Early American Coppers Club,

Charged in the crime were William Z. Swain (32), Wayne R. Moore (33) and Susan Lynn Nay (18). Much of the stolen collection was found in a suitcase in the apartment of the suspects.

John Blackburn (22) was indicted on charges of burglary, robbery, kidnapping and auto theft related to the 1968 robbery of William E. Johnson.

Wayne R. Moore (33) was indicted on charges of burglary, robbery, kidnapping and auto theft related to the 1968 robbery of William E. Johnson.

Susan Lynn Nay (18) was charged in the 1968 robbery of William E. Johnson.

William Z Swain (32) was charged in the 1968 robbery of William E. Johnson.

**\*Rudolph Kohler** (1867-1934) was the victim of a robbery on November 11, 1933. His shop was on the twelfth floor on Fifth Avenue in New York. One of three robbers hit him in the head with a gun and knocked him unconscious. The estimated loss was \$3000.

His death on January 23, 1934, may have been brought on by the robbery.

The same shop of Rud Kohler was robbed on December 22, 1938. Assistant manager Edmund W. May ducked into a back room and grabbed a revolver to fire seven shots at the two robbers. Albert Weiner died of his injuries. The other robber escaped.

The medical examiner declared that Albert Weiner died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. He had a long criminal record with 18 previous arrests.

**\*Ray Lawrence**, (1904-1968) a coin dealer from Anamosa, Iowa, was beaten during a robbery on July 3, 1961. Taken was his wallet with \$60 and a \$1000 check.

Ray and his twin brother Roy were publishers of *The Coin Collector*.

**John De Less** pleaded guilty to charges of aggravated robbery, carrying a concealed weapon and larceny in the robbery of Ray Lawrence. He was sentenced to 23 years in the Anamosa reformatory.

Douglas Charles Hobart was also charged.

**\*Robert Lee** was the owner of **Madison Coin and Stamp** shop in Madison,



Wisconsin. The February 1984 robbery yielded \$30,000 in cash and coins.

**Myron Michael Holmes** was convicted and sentenced to 41 years in prison for the Madison Coin and Stamp robbery. He had served previous prison sentences, and was called a habitual criminal.

**Linda Gordon** was convicted in Illinois in 1976 of manslaughter for stabbing a woman in an argument over a coat. For this she received a four-year prison term. She received a ten-year sentence for involvement in the Madison Coin and Stamp shop robbery.

\*On March 24, 1976, **Kevin Meuse** escaped from the Suffolk County Courthouse while awaiting charges of assault and battery. He pried a grating off a fourth-floor window, found a rope hanging from construction scaffolding and climbed down to the courtyard.

Meuse was charged in the March 24, 1979, robbery of **Carol's Stamp and Coin Shop** in Lynn, Massachusetts. As he was fleeing the scene, he exchanged shots with a police officer. He was convicted on October 10, 1979, and sentenced to 18 to 30 years in state prison. He was released from prison in September 1996 after serving seventeen years.

Then in November, he murdered 19-year-old Aislin Silva by snapping her neck. Associates helped to dismember her body which was buried behind a school. It was discovered by investigators on December 1, 2006.

On March 4, 1997, Meuse was arrested while attempting to rob an armored delivery van.

On March 8, 1997, he was found hanging from a torn shirt in his cell. He was 38 years old.

\***John Vernon Penrod** was convicted of the July 5, 1978, robbery at the **Modesto Coin Center** and sentenced to five years in prison. He lost his right eye in a police shoot-out as he tried to escape.

Also charged was **Forrest Silva Tucker** (1920-2004) who received a ten-year

sentence for the 1978 Modesto robbery as an ex-felon.

Tucker had a long criminal record. He was convicted of bank robbery in 1953. In 1972 he was charged with assault with a deadly weapon on a police officer, auto theft and receiving stolen property.

In 1979 he was serving time at San Quentin prison. On August 9 he escaped with two other inmates in a homemade kayak. While he was out, he robbed a bank in Seekonk, Massachusetts. In June of 1983 he was recaptured in West Palm Beach, Florida after a shoot-out with FBI agents.

He claimed that he made successful escapes from prison 18 times and had unsuccessful attempts 12 times/

Tucker died in a prison medical facility on May 29, 2004, in Fort Worth, Texas.

The story of Forrest Tucker was presented in a 2018 movie, *The Old Man and the Gun*, starring Robert Redford.

\*Coin dealer **Vincent and Dorothy Ratto** and their aunt **Jane Mrbzinski** were returning to the Quality Court Motor Inn in **Allentown**, Pennsylvania, after a buying trip when they were robbed at gunpoint. On June 4, 1980, they were ambushed in the motel stairwell and taken to a nearby field.

**Peter Belietieri** was charged with armed robbery and conspiracy for planning the Allentown robbery but was acquitted at trial in 1985.

**Husan Ayed Madain** was charged with the Allentown crime. He was sentenced to 90 weekends in jail.

**Stanley "Starkey" Fortuniewicz** (1957-2002) was born in Poland. He was charged



Forrest Silva Tucker

and sentenced to five years in prison for the June 1980 Allentown robbery.

In 1982, Fortuniewicz was charged with setting a fire that destroyed an apartment building in August 1980.

**Nabih Abe “Jerry” Khalil** was charged and sentenced to six years in prison for the Allentown robbery.

**Majid Hadeed** gave testimony to the prosecutors in the Allentown case but fled to Syria to avoid prosecution.

\***Jesse C. Willard** entered the Silver Towne Coin Shop on July 28, 1973, and drew a gun with the intent of robbery. He was shot to death by the wife of the owner, Mrs. Leon Hendrickson.

**Silas C. Fletcher** was charged with the attempted robbery of the Silver Towne Coin Shop in the basement of the Hendrickson home. He pleaded guilty and received a ten-year prison sentence.

Fletcher was also suspected in the 1973 kidnapping and murder of police officer Anthony Raymond. His body was placed in a 55-gallon drum and transported to Wisconsin. Fletcher was convicted and sentenced to 100 to 200 years in an Illinois prison. The judge recommended that he never be furloughed or paroled.

\***Chris Ritter** was charged as the mastermind behind a series of robberies around Philadelphia. He identified other coin dealers to be targeted. In 1999 he was sentenced to sixteen years in prison.

**Sydney Smith’s** Rare Coin Shop was robbed in Miami on January 23, 1967. Smith was wounded in the incident.

**Melvin Whittsett** was shot and killed by police officer Robert Ellsworth.

**Luther Raymond Thompson** was also injured and arrested. He was sentenced to fifteen years in prison.

**Richard Lee Richardson** was captured and charged with first degree murder. He was sentenced to ten years in prison.

**Frank J. Ujlachi** was suspected as the getaway driver and charged with robbery and murder. He was captured in Dayton, Ohio. He was sentenced to fifteen years in prison.

The Sydney Smith Rare Coin Shop was robbed again on September 15, 1971, while Smith was vacationing in Europe. Samuel Smith, son of the owner, was confronted by a man with a gun. He tripped the silent alarm and police arrived.

**Martin Peteski** was charged with loitering and prowling. He had recently been charged with fifteen counts of buying, receiving and concealing stolen property.

**Gerald Isaac Sassoon** was charged with loitering and prowling.

\*The home of **Harry Walton** in Wichita, Kansas, was ransacked by two thieves on October 10, 1973. When Walton and his wife, Throne, returned home, they were joined by two more thieves. The wife was held hostage while Walton was kidnapped and taken to his coin shop, where he was forced to open the safe.

**Joe Wayne Clark** received a sentence of 15 years to life.

**Tony Lee Scott** admitted involvement and was sentenced for 15 years to life.

**Gerald Dean Weyer** (1955- ) pleaded guilty to robbery and kidnapping charges and received two 15 years to life sentences in the Walton case.

A sixteen-year-old boy was placed on probation until his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

On February 18, 1974, a customer grabbed merchandise from the store of Harry Walton and fled with Walton in pursuit. Two others joined the chase. The thief surrendered to police.

## **The Great Denver Mint Robbery**

The Great Denver Mint Robbery was not actually a numismatic crime. The story is included here because of the location of the crime at the Denver Mint.

In the early 1920's, brazen gangs were robbing banks in the central part of the country. Apparently the authorities would occasionally arrest, try, convict and sentence members of a gang for crimes perpetrated by a different gang.

The Grand Rapids Savings Bank in Michigan was robbed on December 7, 1921, by four armed men. Police raided a house looking for the robbers and special officer George Brandsma and detective Samuel Slater were shot and killed.

Implicated in the robbery were Leo Bolger, Robert Leon Knapp, Frank McFarland, "Denver Bobby" Walker, and his wife "Indian Rose."

Another gang robbed the Hamilton County Bank in Cincinnati on September 28, 1922.

That gang leader and mastermind was Harvey John Bailey. Others in the gang included Nick Traynor known to Bailey as Chaw Jimmie, Alex Richardson known as Dude, Alvin Johnson and Curly Santle. For this job they added Jimmie Lindon known as Wolf as their driver.

The Hamilton County Bank job yielded \$36,000 in cash plus piles of Liberty bonds and negotiable securities worth \$230,000. The loot was split equally six ways and the robbers went their separate ways. The bank could not recover from the losses and was absorbed by another bank.

Individuals from both gangs gathered in Denver with the intent of robbing a bank there. Harvey Bailey left the group to visit his ailing brother. He identified those who remained as Chaw Jimmie (Trainor), Alvin Johnston (Frank Burke a/k/a Jim Clark), Curly Santle, and Bobby Walsh (Knapp).

While planning the bank job, Nick Trainor notice a truck picking up stacks of bills from the Denver Mint. Their plans changed to robbing a currency pickup at the Mint.

The loot was not newly minted coins, but rather \$200,000 in newly printed \$5 bills kept for safekeeping in the vaults at the Denver Mint.

On Monday, December 18, 1922, a pickup truck was backed up to the front door of the Mint, ignoring the more secure delivery entrance in the rear.

A black Buick pulled up as the Federal Reserve Bank truck was being loaded. Three men jumped out, a guard was shot, money was loaded into the car.

Guards inside the Mint were alerted and some rushed to the windows with rifles. The guards had 106 loaded rifles and revolvers available. Guards inside were concerned about hitting the guards outside and only sixteen shots were taken at the robbers. They believed they struck one and possibly two of the robbers. The Buick sped off and sideswiped a truck taking out a fire hydrant along the way.

Suspicion quickly fell on two couples who had appeared in Denver shortly before the robbery and disappeared shortly afterward. The first were registered as James and Florence Sloan. The others were Harold and Margaret Burns.

A Rickenbacker automobile used by the robbers was traced to a garage owned by Otto Schultz. He was a bootlegger who owned a soft drink parlor where the gang met. He was arrested on January 18, 1923, and charged as an accessory to the Mint robbery and murder of the guard. Eventually he gave up the alias for the gang members. They were Chaw Jimmie (Nicholas Traynor), Florence Burns, Frank Burke (Alvin Johnson) and Ethel, Curly Gordon, and Big Jim Franklin (Harvey Bailey).

Alvin Johnston took the \$200,000 to Chicago to reunite with Bailey. On January 15, Bailey and Johnston took the money to Danny Hogan in Minneapolis.

On February 17, 1923, the Secret Service recovered \$80,000 from the robbery in Minneapolis. Also recovered were \$73,000 in bonds from a bank robbery in Walnut Hills, Ohio.

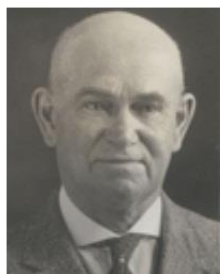
This deal was negotiated with an agent representing the Cincinnati bank that was robbed before the Mint robbery. The bank president made a statement that was picked up by the press and the connection was broken.

On December 1, 1934, Albert T. Clark, Denver Chief of Detectives, announced that the Denver Mint Robbery had been solved. He declared that five men and two women were responsible for the robbery.

He named Harvey Bailey, serving a life term in Alcatraz, and Jim Clark, serving life in Indiana. The others including Robert Leon Knapp, Frank McFarland, Nicholas Trayner, Florence Stone and Margaret Burns, all now deceased.

### **Charles T. Linton**

(1853-1922) was a 65-year-old guard for the Federal Reserve Bank who was injured during the robbery and died at the hospital. He is the only Federal Reserve Bank guard to die in the line of duty.



Charles T. Linton

### **Harvey John Bailey**

(1887-1979) (a/k/a Big Jim Franklin, T. C. Brennon) was known as "The Dean of American Bank Robbers" credited with about thirty bank robberies between 1920 and 1933. He was a suspect in the Denver robbery and in the Walnut Hills bank robbery.



Harvey John Bailey

He escaped from prison in 1933 when eleven prisoners took the warden hostage during a baseball game. On October 7, 1933, he was sentenced to life in prison as an accomplice to a kidnapping in which he was not a participant.

His arrest and trial were sensational at the time. Authorities accused him of involvement in the 1929 Chicago St. Valentine's Day Massacre, the \$2 million robbery of the Lincoln National Bank and Trust Company in 1930, a 1932 bank robbery in Fort Smith Kansas, and the June 17, 1933, massacre at the Union Station in Kansas City.

In 1934 authorities announced they planned to charge Bailey as the driver in the Denver Mint robbery and for the murder of guard Charles Linton. They also planned to charge Jim Clark.

Bailey served time at Alcatraz from 1934 to 1946. He was released from prison in 1964 and died in 1979.

Bailey told his version of the story as *Robbing Banks Was my Business* by J. Evetts Haley (1973). In the book he identified the Denver crew as Alvin Johnston (James Clark), Curly Santle, Bobby Walsh (Knapp) and Nick Trainor.

**Margaret Burns** (1902-1932) (a/k/a "Indian Rose", a/k/a/ Margaret Perry, Maggie Shecog) was the common law wife of Robert L. Walker (Robert Leon Knapp). She was found shot dead and partly burned in a car near Turtle Lake, Wisconsin, in 1932. It is believed she was killed to keep her from talking about other more recent crimes.

**Jim Clark (1)** (1902-1974) was too young and inexperienced to participate in the 1922 Denver robbery. He is frequently mentioned as the Denver robber identified in 1934.

Clark escaped from prison after being convicted of stealing cattle. He was arrested with Ed Davis and Frank Sawyer on June 17, 1932. They were identified by witnesses, charged and falsely convicted of a recent robbery in Fort Scott, Kansas.

Clark escaped With Harvey Bailey from the Kansas State Penitentiary in May 1933 and again in January 1934.

He was released on parole on December 9, 1969, and died on June 9. 1974.

**James Clark (2)** (ca 1899) (a/k/a Frank Burke, Alvin Johnston) was born in Missouri. He did a few jobs with Harvey Bailey including the Denver Mint robbery.

He received a life sentence for a robbery in Clinton, Indiana. He was paroled in June 1950 and talked with a reporter from the *Denver Post*. He claimed that three of the Denver robbers were still living.

He was identified by Albert Clark as one of the Denver robbers but identified by Bailey as Alvin Johnston.

**“Dapper” Danny Hogan** (1880-1928) was a St. Paul gangster and Irish crime boss. He provided protection and services to criminals from around the country.

According to the FBI, Hogan exchanged \$50,000 in used bills for the \$200,000 in new bills taken in the Denver Mint robbery.

Hogan died on December 4, 1928, by a car bomb in his garage in St. Paul. Interesting how the case was never solved.



"Dapper" Danny Hogan

**Robert Leon Knapp** (a/k/a Harold Burns, a/k/a Robert L. Walker, Bobby Walsh) was accused of robbing the Grand Rapids Savings Bank and shooting a police officer during the robbery. He was with the crew in Denver but not identified by Bailey or Schultz.

In 1934 it was reported that he was dead with the circumstances unknown.

**Frank McFarland**, known as “The Memphis Kid,” (a/k/a “Curly” Gordon,

George Conklin. Paul Lattimer, Paul Rogers) got his start in crime picking pockets. He confessed to robbing the Grand Rapids Savings Bank on December 7, 1921, and to shooting a police officer following the robbery.

He was in court on charges of stealing a ride on the Delaware and Hudson railroad when a constable noticed his similarity to a wanted poster. He was taken into custody in Whitehall, New York, on March 29, 1922.

There is a large gap in this story. If he was a confessed bank robber and killer in New York at the end of March, how was he free to commit the Denver robbery in December?

**Curly Sattle** was identified by Bailey as a participant in the Cincinnati job and the Denver job. He was not mentioned in news reports.

**Otto Schultz** was a bootlegger and proprietor of a soft drink parlor in Denver. He cooperated with the federal authorities and identified the Denver gang.

**Florence Sloan** (a/k/a Florence Thompson a/k/a/ Marjorie Schwartz) was a former prostitute and the common law wife of Nicholas Trainor. She was the “Queen” of the mob. After the robbery she insisted on being taken to the body of Nick Sloan.

It was reported that she was found dead in the same car as Margaret Burns in 1932. Other sources say it was not her and what became of her is unknown.

**Nicholas Trainor** (1886-1922) (a/k/a Jimmie Chaw, James Sloan, J. C. Sloan, Nick Sloan) joined the Bailey crew for the 1922 Cincinnati job.

With Bailey gone, Trainor became the leader for the Denver heist. He stood on the running board of the getaway car and fired shots at the Mint guards. He appeared to be shot and was carried away in the car. He was found in the getaway car on January 14, 1923, in a Denver residential garage. The body was frozen and dead from bullet wounds.

The Meyer Undertaking Company donated a casket and The Riverside Cemetery donated

a plot. The funeral for Trainor was bigger than that for guard Linton.

There were so many aliases that it is hard to identify the participants in the story.

Harvey Bailey identified the Denver robbers as Alvin Johnston (Frank Burke), Curly Santle, Bobby Walsh (Knapp) and Nick Trainor.

Bootlegger Otto Schultz identified the crew as Big Jim Franklin (Harvey Bailey), Frank

Burns, Curly Gordon (Frank McFarland), and Chaw Jimmie (Nicholas Trainor).

Denver Chief of Detectives Albert T. Clark identified them as Harvey Bailey, Jim Clark, Robert Leon Knapp, Frank McFarland and Nicholas Trainor.

The Denver Mint robbery suspects served long prison terms for other crimes. None of them was ever charged in the Denver case.

### **The Dupont Heist**

In 1967, Willis Dupont lived in a 42-room mansion with his wife, a former Spanish model, Miren de Amerzola de Balboa, his four-year-old son Victor and one-year-old Lammott. The home was at 3500 St. Gaudens Road in Coconut Grove, Florida. The home had a state-of-the art security system with video surveillance.

Shortly after midnight on September 6, 1967, five armed gunmen entered the home through an unlocked patio door. They burst into the DuPont bedroom demanding money.

Their butler and housekeeper were brought to the bedroom and held there while the robbers searched the house for valuables. They forced Miren to open the bedroom safe at gunpoint. That yielded about \$50,000 in cash and jewelry.

Willis was taken downstairs and forced to open a vault. The robbers gathered six suitcases from the attic and filled them with loot including cash and jewelry. They also found albums of coins, more boxes of rare gold and silver coins plus more than 1000 silver dollars. Total take may have included 7000 coins.

It is believed that the robbers were unaware of the coin collection and were unprepared to take it. They were probably unprepared to dispose of it.

Willis provided a number of silk neckties to bind up the victims. The robbers were told that many of the pieces could be traced. Before leaving the robbers suggested that

they might return the coins for a cash ransom and asked for the name of DuPont's attorney. The robbers abandoned their stolen car and drove off in Maren's flashy new red Cadillac convertible.

The butler freed himself from the ties and police were called. Willis admitted that the alarm system had not been turned on that evening.

#### **Recovery of the Coins**

Efforts to recover the stolen coins began almost immediately.

**Harold Gray** was the attorney for Willis Dupont. He worked to recover the Dupont coins.

**\*Edward L. Stanton** was a Miami private investigator. In January of 1968, he negotiated the ransom of 13 Pioneer and Territorial gold coins from the DuPont robbery.

Stanton and his wife Barbara picked up 500 \$100 bills amounting to \$50,000 that were carried in Barbara's handbag. After the exchange, FBI agents arrested Joseph F. Nordello and Pasquale Sole.

The sting operation may have discouraged the robbers from additional attempts to ransom back the coins.

**\*In 1968** the Brasher Doubloon was recovered in a sting operation. Arrested in the case were William Metzler, his father



Eddie Metzler, Sr., his brother Eddie Metzler, Jr. and a 16-year-old girl.

\*In May of 1968, attorney William Quick found nine gold coins from the Mikhailovitch collection in the grass below a stop sign.

\*The 1855 Kellogg & Co \$50 gold coin was brought in to Metropolitan Rare Coin Exchange in 1974 by a man identified as Richard Martin. He was paid in bullion. The firm was owned by Robert L Hughes and Steven Deeds. James Leeuw was an employee.

Leeuw received the coin as compensation and offered it to Cohen. It was seized by the U. S. Attorney to establish ownership.

It was identified as the DuPont piece by Dr. Vladimere Clain-Stefanelli, John J. Ford and Abe Kosoff. It was eventually returned to DuPont.

\*In 1980, Tom DeLorey was working for the American Numismatic Association Authentication Service. He received a call from a man in Las Vegas who wanted authentication on an 1804 dollar. DeLorey went to Las Vegas to examine the coin but was stood up by the coin seller.

A year later the coin was brought to the ANA in Colorado Springs. DeLorey matched the coin with an auction plate for the Lindeman specimen. DeLorey and Ed Rochette called the FBI. There was inadequate evidence to prosecute the men who submitted the coin.

Willis DuPont loaned the Linderman Class III specimen to the ANA until the Cohen coin was recovered and then donated it to the Smithsonian.

\*The Cohen specimen of the 1804 dollar was recovered in Switzerland on April 23, 1993. Also recovered was an 1850 territorial gold piece.

The Cohen Class I coin was donated to the American Numismatic Association.

\*In September 1999, Steve Teitelbaum, owner of Los Angeles Coin, bought an 1866 Seated Liberty Quarter without motto. He

called Kevin Lipton to assist with authentication. They returned the coin to the DuPont family.

Later that year, Kevin Lipton bought the building previously occupied by Superior Galleries. He recognized the 1866 Seated Liberty half dollar without motto in a show cabinet. He notified Steve Deeds, manager of the coin department, and the coin was returned to the DuPont family.

\*In September 2003, American Numismatic Rarities (ANR) sold one of two known examples of the 1866 Liberty Seated Dollars without motto. The firm was contacted by a collector who believed he may have the only other known example, the DuPont coin.

The owner sent a photograph to John Kraljevich at ANR. He and John Peck confirmed that it was the DuPont coin. The coin was returned to DuPont at the 2004 Baltimore Coin and Currency Convention. DuPont attorney Harold Gray had pursued the coin for 37 years.

### **The DuPont Rogues**

Some suspects were charged with possession of stolen property. Some were detained for questioning but never charged. Others were suspected of involvement without proof.

The statute of limitations may depend on residency, but has likely passed without any of the original robbers being charged.

**Joy Lou Belyeu** was charged with receiving coins stolen from DuPont. In 1967, she and William Metzler had been charged with possession of burglary tools.

**Dolores Castillo** was shot three times in the head with a .32-caliber handgun on January 23, 1968. She was married to Paul Castillo who was serving a fifty-year prison sentence for hotel robbery.

In 1962, Mrs. Castillo was stopped by police. Inside the station wagon was a stole taken in a burglary at the Woolworth mansion. A court determined that the search was illegal.

In 1966 she was accused of attempted bribery and shake-down of a building contractor. She was convicted of grand larceny and sentenced to 2 ½ years in prison. She was free on bond pending appeals.

Mrs. Castillo was known by authorities as a fence for stolen jewelry. They suspect her murder was related to the Dupont robbery and she was killed for skimming money from the robbers.

On May 4, 1968, abortionist Brian Male was found shot to death in a Miami hotel room. The same gun had been used in the Castillo/Perez murder.

Mrs. Castillo was a player in the underworld of organized crime and there were several theories about her murder. As of 1981, her murder was unsolved and there was no proven connection to the DuPont robbery.

**Eugene O. Maready** was charged with the murder of his roommate William Quick. The murder was unrelated to the Dupont robbery. A first-degree murder charge was reduced to second-degree. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

**Richard Martin** sold the 1855 Kellogg \$50 gold piece to Metropolitan Rare Coin Exchange. He was not otherwise identified.

**William Patrick Metzler** was a diver for a salvage company and ex-con. He was charged with possession of the DuPont Brasher Doubloon. The FBI sting had been set up by his father. He claimed he stole it from the original robber. He was convicted in February 1969 and was sentenced to five years in prison.

He escaped from the Pompano Beach Road Camp on July 28, 1970, and was a fugitive for four years. In December 1974, he attempted to burglarize a wealthy homeowner in Fort Lauderdale. The owner had a .357 magnum under his pillow and shot Metzler through the heart, killing him.

**Joseph F. Nardello, Jr.** (1926-1980) was convicted of receiving stolen property in December 1969 after he attempted to ransom 13 stolen DuPont coins for \$50,000.

It was reported in 1978 that he had been arrested 17 times, convicted five times and never spent a day in jail.

**Reynold Brian Perez** was found in Japanese handcuffs, gagged, with eyes taped and three gunshots to the back of the head. He was a pizza cook at the Red Oven Restaurant owned by Delores Costillo.

Authorities believed that he was killed only because he was living with Castillo at the time of her murder.

**William Quick** was a Miami attorney and Marine veteran of World War II. He transported the stolen Brasher Doubloon to Los Angeles. He was found dead in his apartment on December 24, 1968.

**Robert F. Simone** was initially charged with interstate transportation of stolen property. Actually, he had been retained to represent the DuPont family in the exchange. The January 1968 ransom of 13 Dupont coins was conducted in his office.

**Pasquale Sole Jr.** had a long police record with many arrests but few convictions. In 1962 he was charged in the hit-and-run death of a Philadelphia woman. He was convicted of a burglary at the Norwood Post Office. He was acquitted in June 1967 in the shooting of a tavern owner. In 1968 he faced charges for burglary. In May of 1968, he was convicted of those charges.

On May 16, 1973, he was convicted of participation in plotting a robbery at the Doral Hotel on Miami Beach. He received a ten-year prison sentence.

In 2004 it was reported that the original five robbers had never been identified.

### **The Fogg Museum Heist**

A visitor left a package at the security desk at Harvard's Fogg Art Museum on Saturday,

December 1, 1973. Later in the afternoon, the desk got a call from a man who claimed

that he forgot to pick up the package as he left the museum. Since it contained a birthday gift for his daughter, he wanted to return and pick it up.

At 12:45 a.m., a man came to the security desk at the north entrance and asked to retrieve the package. After gaining entrance to the museum and picking up the package, the man took out a small chrome plated revolver and announced it as a hold up.

The man tied the guard with blue plastic tape and made him lie on the floor. The gunman then let three or four others into the museum.

The guard was taken to the third floor. The thieves broke into the coin room and took out a locked safe and some loose coins from a tray.

Responding police spotted two vehicles outside the museum. One was a black T-bird with a single driver and a gold colored late model Buick with four passengers. They sped off to the east.

Museum officials reported that the safe contained 2,650 coins on loan to the museum from the Dewing Greek Numismatic Foundation plus an additional 3,000 coins from the coin room.

The loaned coins came from the estate of Arthur S. Dewing who died in 1972. Many had been photographed and could be identified. Other coins had come from the bequest of Frederick M. Watkins who had also died in 1972. Harvard had poor records and no photographs of thousands of other coins in the museum.

The value of the Dewing coins was placed at more than \$1,870,000 by Dr. Leo Mildenberg of Bank Leu in Zurich. He had sold coins to Dewing.

Estimates of the total value of the loss varied wildly and changed over time. Eventually that estimate settled on \$5 million dollars. At the time, it was the largest art theft in American History.

Suspicion fell on two men who had visited the museum in the previous week. The older man, about 45, had a mustache and glasses.

He had some knowledge of numismatics. The younger man, about 25 had a bloblike face. He appeared too dumb to be interested in coins.

The day after the robbery, Cambridge police reported they were very close to solving the crime.

A graduate student, Patricia Erhart, was asked to estimate how many coins were taken. She came up with an estimate of 8,732 coins. That was probably double the actual number.

In February of 1974, Daniel Steiner, general counsel for the university, gave the FBI a \$25,000 check as a reward for recovery of the coins. Nothing developed and the FBI returned the money on February 26.

Despite the optimism of the FBI, months went by with no positive results.

A California private investigator named Irving Richards became involved. He suggested that he could recover the coins for a price, around \$400,000 to \$500,000. Steiner lost interest at that number. When the price was reduced to \$250,000, Steiner was still not interested.

When the price dropped to \$50,000 in August, Steiner began negotiations. A deal was reached where Richards would receive \$50,000 if all the coins were recovered and a proportional amount for partial recovery.

The FBI gave Richards the name of one of the suspects. He and an associate, Raymond Palmer, paid a visit to Martin G. Regan on October 9, 1974. It was their intention to convince Regan to reveal the location of stolen coins.

To encourage his cooperation, they threatened to kill him, handcuffed him, threw him on the floor and beat him until he was unconscious.

Regan went to the hospital for treatment and was questioned by police. He claimed he had been beaten by burglars. He asked the police what would happen to someone who provided helpful information about a major crime. Regan decided to cooperate with

police, was granted immunity and went into the witness protection program.

Three weeks after he was assaulted by Richards and Palmer, Regan led police to a remote wooded area near Lincoln, Rhode Island. They dug up an old green tool chest, a bowling-ball bag, 3,036 coins and 105 medals.

The FBI began making arrests on November 5, 1974. Two who were arrested were soon released. A judge found that the state had insufficient evidence to charge Dixon and Megan with transportation of stolen property across state lines.

On December 10, 1974, a grand jury indicted Anthony B. Vaglica, Carl R. Dixon, and Louis R. Mathis for armed robbery. Maria T. Megna was charged as an accessory after the fact.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Montreal Police arrested three Americans on November 8, 1974, and searched a bank safe-deposit box rented the previous January by Allen I. Kirchink. They recovered 854 coins that may have come from the Fogg Museum robbery.

Museum officials David Gordon Mitten and Patricia Erhart, now Patricia Mottahedeh, went to Montreal to attempt to identify the coins. The FBI forwarded identification materials to Montreal including some of the coins recovered in Rhode Island. Canadian authorities were wary that the American might attempt to switch coins.

Kirchink was put on trial in Canada on September 12, 1975, and the Americans were asked to authenticate coins from Fogg. Fortunately, they were only asked about the most valuable coins that had good accession records. Leo Mildenberg also came from Zurich to testify.

The court made the decision that the coins had been stolen from the Fogg Museum and allowed them to be returned to Cambridge. Kirchner got a prison sentence of three-and-a-half years.

Irving Richards wanted credit for the recovery and payment for his efforts. It was

estimated that the coins recovered in Rhode Island represented 60% of the value of the collection and Richards was entitled to \$30,000 in payment. The FBI claimed that everything Richards knew came from them and the recovery was the result of the efforts of their 40 agents and not the result of information provided by Richards.

Richards was indicted for assault and battery against Regan but was not sentenced to prison. His accomplice, Raymond Palmer received two sentences of eight years.

Regan, in turn, filed a \$4,900,000 suit against Harvard for injuries suffered in the beating. The University claimed they had no responsibility for the actions of Richards. Eventually the attorney for Regan decided not to pursue the case.

On May 5, police dug up a red fishing tackle box wrapped in a plastic bag. Inside was Dixon's share of the loot amounting to 2000 coins.

A week later police dug up a briefcase in a basement with 883 coins. Total recovery was 6773 coins and 105 medals.

The Dewing pieces included a series of seven Macedonian silver coins for Eion with each featuring a duck. Six were with the coins originally recovered. In 1994, a cleaning woman found the seventh under the edge of a rubber-based carpet in the coin room.

**Anthony B. Vaglica** was identified as the mastermind. At the time of the Fogg trial, he was serving a seventeen-year sentence for a Rhode Island armed robbery. He was convicted and received a sentence of 15 to 20 years. He received a lower sentence than others because his share of the loot had been recovered.

**Carl R. Dixon** was convicted and received a sentence of 20 to 30 years in prison.

**Allen I. Kirchink** was convicted in Montreal of possession of stolen property and sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison.

**Louis Mathis** was convicted and received a sentence of 20 to 30 years in prison.

**Maria T. Magna** was charged as an accessory and received five years of probation. It was at her house that the gang divided up the loot.

**Raymond Palmer** received two consecutive eight-year terms for the beating of Regan.

**Martin G. Regan** was granted immunity for his testimony and placed in witness protection. His new name was not revealed.

**Irving J. Richards** was not paid any reward money and was not sentenced for the beating of Regan.

## Safe Cracking

**\*Ernest Ray Brooks** was charged with burglary and being an ex-felon in possession of a pistol following a burglary and safe cracking at Lincoln Center coin shop. As he was trying to flee on December 20, 1964, he wrecked his car and scattered coins on the ground.

In May of 1951 he escaped from the criminal ward of Mendocino State Hospital.

In November 1951, he made a brief escape from San Quentin Prison. He was discovered in the breakfast line in an adjacent building.

In 1954 he escaped from prison in Oklahoma by cutting through a steel fence. He was recaptured after two days.

Brooks had a long record of burglaries. In 1960 he was paroled in Oklahoma after serving 6½ years of a 27-year sentence.

In January 1965 he used a spoon to unscrew a metal plate and then attempted to use the

plate to open a jail door. He was charged with attempted escape and destruction of property.

In June of 1969, he was being held awaiting arraignment when he broke through the ceiling tiles and crawled up into a maze of wire, pipes and ventilation ducts. He was caught after a two-hour search.

Then in July of 1969, he set fire to his shirt and filled his cell with smoke.

**\*Harbor Coin** of Gurnee, Illinois, was burglarized twice on January 28 and March 13, 2013. In the second case, the loss was about \$200,000 in cash and coins. Two safecrackers were charged with the crime.

**Michael Paulson** had a long history as a safecracker. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 23 years in prison.

**Robert Boardman** pleaded guilty to felony theft and was sentenced to two years in prison.

## Tax Evasion

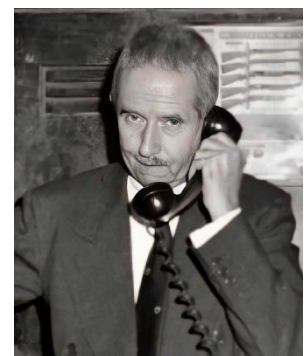
**William Dominick** was the owner of Westwood Rare Coin. He was charged with failing to pay more than \$400,000 in taxes owed between 2010 and 2014. He was sentenced to 15 months in prison and ordered to pay restitution.

**LaVere Redfield** is well known for his collection of silver dollars and a 1952 burglary.

In 1960, he was convicted of avoiding payment of \$335,000 in income taxes for 1953 through 1955. He received a five-year

prison sentence and a \$60,000 fine. He served time at Terminal Island Prison near Long Beach. He was released after two years.

**Dennis Steinmetz**, President of Steinmetz Coins and Currency Inc,



LaVere Redfield, 1960

was charged with fraud in avoiding \$400,000 in state sales tax. He was charged with 48 counts of filing fraudulent sales tax returns and 48 counts of refusing to collect sales tax.

It was alleged that he recorded transactions through Delaware rather than Pennsylvania.

Steinmetz pleaded guilty to one count, was sentenced to two months in prison and assessed \$10,000 in costs.

## Theft

**James Clark (3)** known as “Small Bad Jim” stole gold bars from the Denver Mint in February 1864. There is a brass marker telling the story on 17<sup>th</sup> Street in Denver.

**Henry S. Cochran** was a weighing clerk at the Philadelphia Mint. Over a period of ten years, he stole \$134,000 in gold bars from the Mint, ending in 1893.

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing suffered a \$160,000 employee theft in 1954. The plant had dummy packages of unprinted currency. Two of these were substituted for actual cash and carried out with Christmas packages under a pair of dirty pants. It was the largest theft in BEP history.

**James Rufus Landis** received a sentence of three to nine years and a fine of \$10,000.

**Jeff Larson** was the proprietor of American Coin and Gallery in Billings, Montana. He was charged with stealing rare coins and silverware from a safe in a building he leased.

He received a sentence of 20 years with all but three years suspended and ordered to pay \$75,000 in restitution.

**Charles H. Nelson** received a sentence of two to eight years and a \$3000 fine.

**William Giles** received a sentence of two to eight years and a \$3000 fine.

**Roger C. Patterson** received a sentence of 20 months to five years.

**Edith I. Chase** was placed on probation for one to three years.

Organized thefts occurred at the Philadelphia mint in 1973. Employees left bags of coins worth \$6,100 in a location

where they could be removed by a vending machine employee.

**Gerald Flicker** was placed on five years probation and assessed a \$2000 fine.

**Nicholas Francesco** was sentenced to three months in prison, four years probation and a \$5000 fine.

**Timothy Warren** was given two years probation and a \$5000 fine.

**Nicholas DiDonato** was the vending service employee. He received three years probation and a \$1,500 fine.

**William Gray** had worked at the Philadelphia since 1996. He was discovered in 2011 to have stolen presidential coins that were missing the edge lettering. He sold 32,000 coins to a California dealer. Value was about \$2.4 million dollars. He received a 36 month prison sentence.

**Alan J. Brotman** was the owner of Numismatic Gallery Inc. from 1973 to December 1975. He filed for bankruptcy in February 1976.

On June 23, 1976, Brotman was found guilty of larceny for stealing two rare coins worth \$2,500 from a client. He was sentenced to four years in prison.

In October of 1976, he pleaded guilty to addition charges of thefts from other clients. He owed \$15,350 to a gas station owner and \$5,000 to a Baltimore obstetrician. He was sentenced to four years in prison and ordered to pay restitution but he had no assets.

In 1977 he was expelled from the Early American Coppers Club for unethical conduct.



By 1979, he moved to Iowa and established Alan Brotman Investment Corp. in West Des Moines. In 1980, he claimed to be Iowa's largest gold and silver trader. In 1981, he filed for bankruptcy again.

On July 27, 1984, he was sentenced to ten years in prison. His sentence was suspended after just four months and he was put on two-years probation.

**Travis Burrell**

walked into Voecks' Fox Valley Coin & Diamonds in Kimberly, Wisconsin, on March 28, 2022. He laid a wad of money on the counter and said he wanted to buy gold coins. When a clerk came out of the vault with a tube of gold coins worth more than \$43,000, he grabbed the coins and went out the door.



Travis Burrell

He was followed out by an armed security guard who fired as the fleeing car attempted to run him over. The SUV was stopped by police in Winnebago County.

In court he pleaded no contest to a charge of felony retail theft as party to a crime. On December 22, 2022, he was sentenced to three years in prison.

**Orville Harrington** was charged with the theft of \$100,000 in gold from the Denver mint in 1920. He was arrested on February 5 when a gold bar was found in the hollow of his wooden leg. He received a prison sentence of ten years.

**David Mattsen** pleaded no contest to charges of conspiracy to commit grand larceny in the theft of silver from Ted Binion. He had been Binion's ranch manager. He was required to do 200 hours of community service.

**George A. McCann** was employed as Mint cashier during 1934 to 1940. It is believed that he stole 1933 Double Eagles from the Mint.

On May 26, 1941, he pleaded guilty to stealing coins from the Mint. He was sentenced to a year and a day at Lewisburg federal penitentiary.

**Michael Milet** pleaded no contest to conspiracy to commit grand larceny in the theft of silver from Ted Binion. He paid a \$2000 fine.

**Pamela Jo Rosas** (65) was a mail clerk at the Beaumont, Texas, Post office. She was convicted of theft from the mails, sentenced on March 4, 2024, to 37 months in federal Prison, and ordered to pay restitution of \$179,271.15.

One of the victims was Universal Coins and Bullion in Beaumont. They filed claims for stolen coins and were assured that the thefts occurred after the coins left the Beaumont facility. Michael Fuljenz is president of Universal Coins and Bullion. He reported that the company suffered losses of \$400,000 in one year.

Rosas came under suspicion for her handling of packages and diversion of packages that contained tracking devices. A search of her apartment revealed hundreds of stolen coins.

**Charles P. Rumpp** was foreman of the cashier's counting room and was charged in 1941 for thefts from the Philadelphia Mint. The coins stolen were old defaced coins returned to the Mint to be melted and recycled.

**Roy G. Russell** admitted that he stole \$125 in small coins from the Mint in 1936.

**Wyatt Yeager** was collections manager at the American Numismatic Association briefly



Wyatt Yeager

from January to March 2007. In October 2007, an investigation began when it was discovered that coins were missing from the ANA collections.

Yeager consigned stolen coins to a May 2007 auction in Baltimore, a June 2007 auction in St. Louis and a July 2007 auction in Melbourne, Australia. Most notable was

an Australian 1813 Holey dollar that realized \$155,755 in the sale.

On January 12, 2012, he pleaded guilty to the theft of 300 coins with a value of about \$1 million. On April 24, 2012, he was sentenced to 27 months in federal prison and ordered to pay \$948,505 in restitution.

On October 23, 2012, the 1813 Holey dollar was returned to the ANA Money Museum.

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